



messing about in **BOATS**

Special Features This Issue
“Arey’s Pond Catboat Regatta”
“Cruising with a Cold on the Chesapeake”
“In Search of a Beautiful Lightweight Canoe”

Volume 25 –Number 15

December 15, 2007



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In This Issue...

- 2 Commentary
- 3 From the Journals of Constant Waterman
- 4 You write to us about...
- 6 Book Review
- 7 Delaware River TSCA Messabout
- 8 Arey's Pond Catboat Regatta
- 9 Sandbaggers Support Youth Sailing Programs
- 11 Our MASCF Weekend Saved
- 12 Cruising With a Cold on the Chesapeake
- 16 A Winter in Florida - Part 3
- 19 Sailing the A-Cats
- 20 The Snark's Retirement
- 21 Living on an Offshore Maine Island
- 22 Mike's 1957 Richline Runabout
- 24 Two Pretty Good Boats
- 25 Remembering a One-Sheet Dory
- 26 In Search of a Beautiful Lightweight Canoe
- 29 Bolger on Design
- 31 Trade Directory
- 37 Classified Marketplace
- 39 Shiver Me Timbers

Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



There are a number of small special interest maritime publications out there in boat land that do not turn up on your local newsstand that I have found of some interest and I thought I'd pass on mention of several to you here.

Since last July I have received four issues of *A Brush with Sail*, an online magazine published by New Zealand artist Jim Bolland. It first turned up last summer on our email address that we maintain for subscription fulfillment purposes, but which now seems to be becoming a catchall way for those who are mail averse to reach me indirectly over the internet. Roberta prints out each copy so I may read it, typically ten to 15 sheets 8.5"x11" but with image size on each of 5"x8.25". This adds up to about a 12-page 5.5"x8.5" booklet were it conventionally printed.

About a half dozen topics are covered in each issue, each with color photos appropriate to the subject. Focus is mostly on serious big time yacht racing (like America's Cup) with historical backgrounding, but an underlying thrust is also to market Jim's paintings. Those shown to date in each issue are really nice yachting scenes. While I'm not much interested in the big time yachting scene, I do like to look each issue over. You can get a look at his original art and prints at his only US outlet, Skipjack Nautical Wares & Marine Gallery, 629 High St., Olde Towne Portsmouth, VA 23704 or at www.skipjacknauticalwares.com. To reach the artist/publisher directly to subscribe to *A Brush with Sail* go to jim@jimbolland.co.nz or visit his website at www.auldsmug.com. No price was quoted in the issues received.

Another publication which I receive printed in that 5.5"x8.5" format (half conventional magazine page size), is *Smokestack*, devoted to steam boating. This 32-page (plus cover) bi-monthly is loaded with color photos of steam boating, including coverage of many gatherings. About a dozen of the 32 pages are advertising for boats, hulls, and all the gear that steam powered boating requires.

I'd sure like to be able to run all that color and marveled at how it could be done until I made note of the \$26 subscription price for six issues. With only the equivalent of six 16-page full size issues (96 pages) to fulfill a subscription (vs, for example, our twenty-four 40 page issues (960 pages) for \$32 it appears that there might be adequate funding for the added costs of color.

This is a publication of the North American Steam Boat Association and is sent only to members (we exchange magazines, I am not a member). It is published from 1876 Lakeland Dr., Finksburg, MD 21048, (410) 549-3446 10am-8pm EST, smokestackonline@yahoo.com. Membership applications go to NASBA, c/o Nancy Graham, 131 Warren Ave., Harvard, MA 01451.

Moving overseas for my next review we have the quarterly magazine of the Dinghy Cruising Association from Great Britain. Now here is a read right up our creeks, all about cruising in small boats in the British Isles, ala the Dyes of Wanderer fame. The Spring 2007 issue (#194, they go back a ways!) was a hefty 56-page full size magazine with a four page color center insert and a heavier cover wrap. It is packed with Association news (this is really an association with some 20 officers devoted to all the aspects of dinghy cruising). Lots of cruising adventures and the usual hints and tips fill out each issue to enhance such adventures.

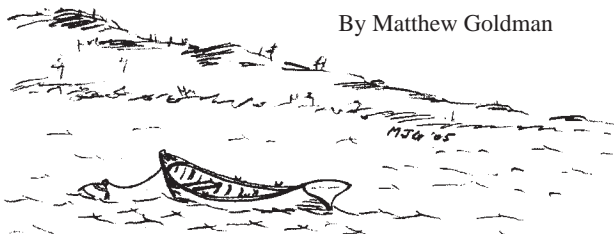
Overseas membership was £21 last spring (it may be more now if British overseas postage went up as much as US did last spring). You can go to www.dca.uk.com for particulars. *Dinghy Cruising* has way more heft to it than our own TSCA quarterly, *Ash Breeze*, the Brits who mess about cruising in sailing dinghies may be thousands of miles away but they are heavily into this messing about in small boats.

A final example for now of some of the exotic small boat publications out there for those interested is another overseas association newsletter, *Paddles Past*, currently edited and published in Germany (in English) by an American expatriate. Its title, *The Journal of the Historic Canoe and Kayak Association*, identifies its subject matter. The Autumn 2007 issue (#63, they too have been around for some time) is a 32-page loose leaf bound (one of those plastic binders) plain sort of publication with historical content (including lots of period illustrations) ranging over all the years, cultures and worldwide locations which have (and still do) indulge in building and paddling canoes and kayaks. For anyone focused on these subcultures of small boating this is a must.

You will have to go to the association website at <http://uk.geocities.com/hcka@btinternet.com/> for further details about them and their newsletter. The editor is Tony Ford and he can be reached at tford@web.de.

On the Cover...

Two sandbaggers, the *Bull* and the *Bear*, were on hand for last August's Arey's Pond Catboat Regatta and attendant youth sailing program. More photos and comments on them are featured in this issue.



By Matthew Goldman

From the Journals of Constant Waterman

Christmas morning again, not yet light, and a 4' Yule log ablaze on the hearth. Twenty-eight degrees, no snowflakes, no hurricanes, no hail, no drought, no clatter of little reindeer on the roof. Not yet, at any rate. I continue to hope Saint Nick might choose to come by boat this once, perhaps a Peapod drawn by a brace of porpoise. He certainly could find a vacant slip this time of year. Then he could leave our presents aboard our boats. I think the time has come for a new tradition.

My son, Ezra, and his adorable friend, Melati, stopped here this week. Thursday they borrowed my Whitehall pulling boat and exercised her a bit. They took advantage of the mild day to row as far as Ram Island. There they went ashore to visit the sheep.

I remained in the shop and messed about with the Petrel until the skipper took us all for Christmas lunch to the Chinese buffet. When we returned we had our little party and exchanged all manner of semi-precious gifts. I received a soldering iron, a 'Dremel' tool set, and some original note cards made by our professional photographer, who has worked part time at our shop some 20 years.

I, of course, had made a last minute foray to the marine consignment shop in Mystic the evening before. There I perused the hundreds of second hand books on boats and boating and marine history and boat building and sailing and seamanship. I nearly went aground among the strakes and shoals and stays'ls until it struck two bells and the mate commenced to dog down the doors. Despite this, I came away with an armload of books and a Wedgwood plate commemorating the *Bluenose*, that most famous and most swift Canadian schooner.

The volume on wooden boats surprised us all. The skipper turned it over. The jacket's reverse displayed a stunning color photograph of a little Herreshoff sailboat at anchor. Not a Fish class but a Petrel, a fiberglass hull with lots of bright work, so well crafted as to fool the compiler of the book into thinking her a wooden boat. The skipper recognized the boat and told us the location of the photo and the name of the photographer.

"There's the lazarette cover for the Diesel," he exclaimed. "No wooden boats had those."

Within were three more reproductions of the same photo from slightly differing perspectives, but nowhere had they identified the boat. Four pictures of a fiberglass hull in a book of wooden boats. What an advertisement for our boat shop were only credit given.

Friday morning I drove Ezra and Melati to Hadlyme to continue their holiday sojourn. Melati came away with one of Paula's books on horticulture and a jar of our homemade elderberry jam. Perhaps when she finishes her degree we shall see her a bit more often. I certainly hope so.

I returned to Noank and worked on the Petrel. Checked on *Moon-Wind* and fired up her motor. The water pump doesn't appear to work well and I need to remove the motor to rebuild it. When I shall find the time is another matter.

A local sailor came by to discuss some repairs he needs. Then, of course, he had to regale me with a proper yarn. He used to own a sloop that had no lifelines and, as he so quaintly put it, "One day I just happened to take a walk over the side."

Fortunately he caught hold of the jib sheet and was towed alongside for a while. The sun shone, the warm water soothed, he rather enjoyed the ride. As his only companion, ignorant of sailing, couldn't steer into the wind, it seemed he should give up amusing himself and spend his energy getting back aboard.

Good thing, too. Having struggled on deck, he discovered he bled rather profusely from a puncture wound and, having been in warm water, had never felt a thing. He found it droll to realize he very well could have died.

I presume that one of these less than halcyon days I shall ascend the companionway to discover Old Mortality at the helm, he of the frigid whiskers and icy smile. Then he shall cry an ultimate "hard alee," put the tiller over a final time, trim her smartly, and set a course for a farthest shore beyond some unimaginable horizon.

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Gundalow Report

During the 25 years since the Piscataqua gundalow *Captain Adams* was launched, the typical wooden boat aging process has taken its toll. By last fall the gundalow was leaking badly and the bottom had not been caulked in years. We made the important financial commitment to drydock the gundalow for extensive repairs last April. We hired a crew of professionals who tackled a long list of much needed improvements including new internal structural supports, caulking, bottom paint, and an all new bilge pumping system. Still to come are life lines and other safety equipment which are necessary for US Coast Guard approval for continuing dockside programs onboard the gundalow. The is in fantastic shape now and will still be suitable for dockside programs for many years.

The gundalow visited South Berwick, Maine, Little Harbor School, Prescott Park, the NH State Pier, Adams Point, and Stratham, New Hampshire, this year and we offered our programs on local maritime heritage and the coastal environment to 5,000 students from 30 schools and eight youth groups. We had over 6,000 other visitors who came aboard for tours and special programs. Our collaborations with partners such as the Old Berwick Historical Society, Strawberry Banke, Great Bay Discovery Center Stewards, and UNH Marine Docents continue to enrich the gundalow programs.

These programs continue to be praised by teachers who see the gundalow as a unique way to teach kids about our region's cultural heritage. Students seem more enthusiastic than ever to come aboard the world's only remaining gundalow. Through our Contemporary Coastal Issues events the public sees the gundalow as a catalyst that connects heritage with environmental stewardship.

Another major initiative this year was to increase our visibility, which saw our sail hoisted daily at Prescott Park in Portsmouth, publicity in the *Portsmouth Herald*, the *New Hampshire Gazette*, and *WoodenBoat* magazine. We have a new coloring book for kids and finely crafted gundalow models we will use in our outreach programs.

The big news is we are planning for our next phase with the help of a grant from the NH Charitable Foundation. Imagine for a moment two gundalows, the *Captain Adams* as a dockside exhibit and another yet to be constructed or named gundalow to be used promoting awareness of our maritime heritage and contemporary coastal environment in the Piscataqua Region. This would be a replica gundalow that will be certified by the US Coast Guard to carry 35 passengers on educational sailing trips on the Piscataqua River and all the connecting rivers in Great Bay.

Constructed of wood but with all the necessary modern systems, the new gundalow will provide a unique opportunity for school groups and the public to sail on a regionally significant vessel. While underway students and the public will learn how to set the lateen sail, navigate with the current, steer by a compass, sail upriver with the tide, and analyze water samples to discover how water quality impacts the eel grass and oyster beds.

It's more than a dream! We have half-hull models, line drawings, and financial feasibility studies in the works.

The Gundalow Company, Portsmouth, NH

Adventures & Experiences...

Muskoka Memories

(My story, "All the Boats and the Boathouse," which appeared in the July 1 issue also was published in the local Ontario *Muskoka Magazine* in August which occasioned my receiving the following letter. David Pardoe.)

When I read your "Pardoes Passion" in the August 2007 issue of *Muskoka Magazine* (also cover story in our July 1 issue—Ed) I felt compelled to write to you. We had a very special experience four summers ago on your beloved Fairy Island which I'll share with you later in my letter.

Your story struck a chord for me. Articulate and expressive, unfolding in 1898, it takes us back in time to the beginning of a journey which began over one hundred years ago. Beyond the fact that this is your personal family history, this is a tale which encapsulates a snapshot in time of the Muskoka that was, a gentler time. For many of us who fall under the spell of the magic of this region, Muskoka is the centre of our universe. The boats, boathouses, islands, water, land, rock, sky, all of it so special and all of us so lucky to have some time, place, and space here. So, although I cannot imagine what a void it must now be to live without all of that, what a privilege, and how lucky you are, to have those trunk loads of memories, enough to last a lifetime. Thank you for sharing those memories with us.

Here's my Fairy Island story. Four summers ago we were out for a day on the water. Lake Joe was our destination. We had a boatload of friends, there were eight of us in all. We loaded up the boat with refreshments, lunch, towels. We were in *Edith*, our 1947 Norse. She's a very comfortable, slow old vessel. We were out for hours. It was one of those stunning, glorious summer days. We stopped in to the Lake Joe club for a cocktail and then, just as we headed home on our journey up the lake towards the Joe River, the captain noticed that the boat was taking on water.

Within minutes everyone's feet were wet. Just on the verge of panic, we all tried to stay calm, we had kids on the boat and a dog, we spotted an island probably 2,000' or more away. Our able captain kept us calm and steered our boat in peril in that direction. Some weathered old suitcases were on the dock and it appeared that folks were getting ready to leave. We asked for permission to dock the boat and step ashore. We really didn't know what to expect, it was such an imposition for all of us to drop in in such a panic. We were overwhelmed at the kindness and hospitality which welcomed us to your beautiful Fairy Island.

We all quickly stepped off the boat. Here were two gentlemen, one must have been your son, who immediately came to our rescue, ran up to the cottage and returned with some champagne bottle corks. Seemed like a rather absurd solution at the time, however, one of these was promptly pushed into the trouble spot in the bow where we discovered

the plug had popped out. They then quickly handed the guys two water pumps. It took a while, we had taken on quite a lot of water. But within the hour *Edith* was buoyant again and in good repair.

As if all of this help wasn't enough, the gals on the dock invited us all to take a swim. We took them up on their kind offer, then sat basking in the sun over by the old boathouse. I sought some shelter from the sun just inside the doors of that lovely old boathouse which is in the picture with the article. The scent of cedar was everywhere. That day the guys caught a glimpse of *Mab* (your beautiful 1934 Minnett-Shields). Your son took them over to see it. I was worried that my husband would strike a deal that very day to purchase her. We'd heard a rumour that it might be for sale. However, not meant to be. Hopefully her new owner will treat her well. I'm sure he will.

So that day was a special one for all of us. We didn't want to leave that island, your beautiful, magical Fairy Island. It has such a special feel to it. We thanked our hosts and headed home. I always meant to send a thank you note to your family for their generosity of spirit that day, but never got around to it. Here it is at last. Thank you for sharing your Fairy Island with us, even for just that one hour.

Catherine Edith Lodge, Pickering, ON

Designs...

One Sheet Speakeasy

Re: John Hadden's review of Bob Dalley's one sheet boat. I call mine the *Speakeasy*. If this boat was not stable, I would not be pictured sitting in it in a beach chair. I can also carry it myself.

Meri Honeycutt, Swannanoa, NC



12½ Worth Turning to a Life of Crime

Seeing the Bolger plywood 12½ in the November 1 issue reminded me that a few years ago I wrote to Phil Bolger about this design. I received a nice handwritten note about it. Unfortunately this design is not trailerable so I didn't build it.

I always wondered why Phil only used two panels per side. I thought he might use three or four. Ed Monk has several designs from the 1950s which use three panels and they were said to sail as well as a round bottomed boat. Dudley Dix has four panel designs now which are highly regarded. Maybe Phil was thinking of getting more built by making it simpler. Just looking at what appeared in *MAIB* made me wish it had more capacity inside, more opportunity for personal details.

What caught my attention in what Phil wrote was that the gaff version was not out-sailed by the marconi version. This has convinced me to put more emphasis in my newsletter (*Under Ten Feet*) reviews on what a hull can do.

The 12½ is the one boat for which I would turn to a life of crime and moral decay in order to steal. I once wrote a comedy short story about stealing a Herreshoff. Maybe I should put the story in UTF or then again maybe not!

Paul Austin, *Under Ten Feet*, Dallas, TX

Information of Interest...

Nice Product, Great Service

In August I ordered a pair of cleats from the Winters Brothers ad in the back of *MAIB*. I wanted to report that they are very well made, very well finished with five coats of varnish, and look very good. Not only does the price include shipping, but they came in a little drawstring cotton bag. Winters Brothers further stated that if I broke one to send the pieces back and they would replace it free. They are definitely well worth their price, the work is excellent.

Here is the note that came with the cleats:

"Thanks for the order! I hope you are pleased with the ash cleats and stainless steel hardware. The wood came from the Garden Peninsula in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Each pair of cleats is hand crafted and matched. They are filed, sanded, and coated with five layers of spar varnish. If you break one, send me the pieces and I'll replace it, free!"

Fred Winters, Winters Brothers, 4555 II Rd. Garden, MI 49835

Where the Canoes Are

Mississippi Bob can't find 146,256 canoes in Minnesota. Well, I know where thousands of them are. Yes, many canoes are out there killing grass in the backyard, except for in the fall in northern Minnesota. During this time of year people use canoes to pick wild rice. So you can easily find out how many canoes are used for ricing by getting the number of ricing licenses sold. Divide that number by two (you need a poler and a beater) and you will find the missing canoes. I picked wild rice between classes at Bemidji State University in Northern Minnesota.

Bob Dalley, Lake Junaluska, NC

New Terror Threat? Small Boats

This turned up in my morning news on AOL recently:

"The nation's small boats are facing increased scrutiny from the Homeland Security Department which fears they could be used in a nuclear attack or a lethal explosion at a US port.

The federal government is ratcheting up its efforts to monitor small boats, worried that terrorists could use them to pull off nuclear attacks or major explosions in busy ports. There are 17 million small boats throughout the country.

Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said that he had ordered agency leaders to "raise the protection level with respect to small boats." Attacks this decade by terrorists ramming bomb-filled speedboats into a US battleship and a French tanker are worrisome, Chertoff said.

The Coast Guard is seeking a new federal requirement that all boat operators carry identification wherever they are on the water so it can build a database of boaters found in restricted areas. The agency also wants to re-

quire state boating courses to teach security protocols such as avoiding cruise ship terminals and military facilities.

Although new mandates would apply to operators of state-registered boats, usually those with engines, the Homeland Security Department is focused on protecting major ports near large cities.

Paul Austin, Dallas, TX

Predator Clams

The oldest living animal known was a quahog recently dredged from the sea bottom near Iceland (350+/- years). This reminded me that quahogs are bird predators. Twice since I moved here to Pages Creek in North Carolina I have seen kingfishers dive on a target and then start struggling unable to fly away. Both times I rushed to save them in the mud but did not arrive in time. Each time I found a quahog clamped tightly on the bird's beak suffocating it. When I opened the quahog to release it, I found that it had clamped so tightly that the shell was chipped in two places. Apparently the quahog had its fleshy foot out feeding and the kingfisher mistook the moving foot for prey.

This is not the only instance of shellfish attacking birds that I have observed. In the '50s I was sailing a Lightning on the North East River at the head of Chesapeake Bay while mallards were migrating south in flocks. I saw something writhing in the water ahead. It turned out to be a mallard with a fresh water mussel clamped on its beak. The mussels are prolific there in the eelgrass and feed with their shells opened.

"Nature in the raw is seldom mild" as the Old Gold cigarette commercials used to declaim.

Dave Carnell, Wilmington, NC

Information Wanted...

An Unusual Boat

A friend of mine recently showed me an unusual boat. It is a Peterborough Canoe Company sailing canoe. What to me is particularly unusual about it is its method of construction. It is made of tongue-and-groove cedar strips about ⅝" thick and 3" wide. These strips do not run lengthwise, as is usual, but go around the boat; that is, crosswise to the keel. They are copper nailed and screwed to about four longitudinal stringers, the keel, and the gunwales. The boat is quite light. It has graceful lines and the usual attention to detail found in Peterborough boats. Its rear seat is caned. The rudder has an elegant shape.

At first I thought that the boat was about 80 years old. My current thought is that it is much younger. I conjecture that the unusual construction is an attempt to compete with fiberglass boats. The crosswise strips are not tapered. I surmise that they were steamed and put on rapidly over a mold. The tongue-and-groove construction makes for tight joints. The boat is not canvas covered and I doubt that any of the joints are glued.

Has anyone seen a boat built like this? What would be a guess concerning its age and why it was built this way? If there is any interest, I will have some pictures taken of the boat and send them to you.

Bradford Lyttle, 5729 S. Dorchester Ave, Chicago, IL 60637. Tel: (773) 324-0654, Fax: (773) 324-6426, Email: blyttle@igc.org

Looking for a Minuet

I am searching for a boat that is out of production. I want to ask our community of subscribers if anyone knows where a Minuet (Bob McVay design) sailboat is that needs a new home. Hopefully there is a neglected (or not) one sitting somewhere that a reader knows about. I have access to a trailer that is made for a Minuet. A project boat is fine.

Doug Champion, 885 Osprey Point Road, Beaufort, NC 28516, (252) 728-7967, doug@zenoroad.com

Opinions...

Fishermen Just Take and Put Nothing Back

I don't think Bolger and Co. can save the commercial fishermen from themselves, but I understand where he and Susanne are coming from and why there is frustration and desperation. I heard Bucky Fuller talk years ago just a few months before he died and he, too, was frustrated and desperate with the message that we have enough resources for everyone on the earth to live quite well if we had the collective will to make it happen. Unfortunately we don't.

Around here most commercial interests think that it is their god given right to take the last of each species. I have seen commercial fishermen compared to family farmers many times. This is an incorrect analogy. Farmers nurture and raise something before the harvest (pigs, cows, wheat, apples, whatever), while fishermen just take and put nothing (other than dead bycatch) back. A more correct analogy is with miners who takes whatever they find, leaving tailings and waste behind.

Doug Champion, Beaufort, NC

Treading a Dangerous Path

Mr. Bolger, one of my heroes, is treading a dangerous path. In 1974 a fellow named R.D. Leahey in England produced a small book entitled *Modern Inshore Fishing* in which he detailed his efforts to help the English inshore fishing fleet by building and marketing lightweight folding prawn and lobster traps as well as other gear.

He somehow attracted some investment capital (family?) and had a rather unique looking catamaran fishing boat built from which he fished alone. He was very much against taking any crew, stating that they usually preferred to stay in bed to working.

Mr. Leahy states in his book that to fishermen the word "change" is a dirty word. After a lifetime of effort to help the fishermen Mr. Leahy died a broken man.

G. Scott Shepard, Wilton, ME

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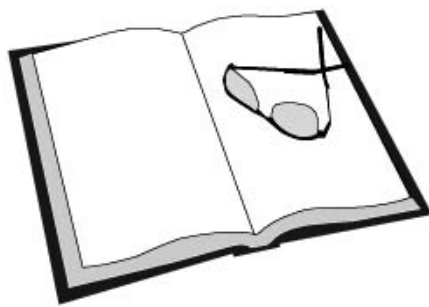
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Book Reviews

Red Sky in Mourning

By Tami Oldham Ashcraft
Hyperion Books New York, 2002

Review and Remarks by McCabe Coolidge

Twenty-five years ago, while sailing the sounds of North Carolina, I was tracked down by the far edge of a hurricane, one that was supposed to find landfall in South Carolina. It found the four of us in our little 26' Hunter sailboat and knocked us down, twice! Luckily we were blown ashore and my family and I escaped. The sailboat was damaged but repairable. Soon after I was told, "Sell that damn thing. Now! Today!" So I did.

Tami Ashcraft and her fiancé Richard Sharp were delivering an ocean-going Trintella 44 from Tahiti to San Diego in 1983 when their worst fears (and mine, too) were realized. A hurricane bore down on them; if they tacked north, the hurricane followed, if they reached west, the hurricane came after them. When the hurricane did roll their sailboat Richard was lost at sea and Tami was knocked unconscious.

Red Sky in Mourning is about the days and weeks of Tami's life after the knock-down, after the loss of her beloved, after the broken mast, and the knee deep water in the galley. She had little hope of ever being found. Through the use of flashbacks Tami describes her journeying with Richard, including their hopes and dreams after delivering the sailboat to her owners in San Diego. Then the worst happens and what do you do? This book is about surviving 42 days at sea. Batteries dead, engine won't start, no electronics, labels washed off tin cans, potable water scarce. With the mast cut away Tami uses the boom, attaches a jury-rigged sail, and sets her course toward San Diego.



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Tami's is a story of loneliness and depression but it's one of persistence. She tells us of her struggle to just make it through the day, then the night, awaiting the sunrise. Most often we read of empty sailboats drifting about, no one aboard. How does she do it? Especially when freighters and tankers pass nearby? She waves at them, directs flares at them, they steam away. How did she find that slim thread of hope and hang on to it?

Tami finds landfall in Hawaii, not San Diego. She does start a new life but not until she flounders, questioning everything about her life on land. Eventually she relearns to trust that deep small voice, the voice she heard daily aboard the Trintella while floundering at sea.

Ocean voyaging has always been a dream of mine. But here I am, coming up on my 65th birthday with only a few thousand ocean miles under my belt. And I sold my Beneteau 36 sailboat and purchased a 1984 white cedar, 13' Herreschoff/White Catspaw. Clearly I'm widening the gap between my ocean cruising dreams and the sailboats I own. "What's happening?" I ask myself.

One of my all time favorite books is the *Prayers of the Cosmos* by Neil Douglas-Klotz who translates from the Aramaic the prayers of Jesus. Here's a sentence from the Lord's Prayer, "Help us fulfill what lies within the circle of our lives: each day we ask no more no less."

What is the circle of my life? Your life? Does age reduce the reach, the diameter? While I lived on a sailboat in San Francisco Bay, many of the men my age, in nearby slips, traded in their sailboats for trawlers with no excuses given. Just a life transition, I figured.

A couple of months ago a friend gave me his 30-year-old Sunfish. The sail was limp and the rudder attachment was broken. He handed it over to me with a sly grin on his face, "I'm getting too old for this kind of thing." I've already repaired the rudder, found a used sail in good condition, and have taken her out a few times.

One day a northeasterly blew in and I headed that old Sunfish right into the wind, leaning out, way out, my stomach muscles cried, the tendons in my arm about gave out, but for those moments I was that teenager again, sailing the deep waters of a northern Michigan lake on a wooden Sailfish. From shore my wife watched me and when I came coasting in, she just shook her head. I didn't care. I had one of those Cheshire cat smiles on my face.

Maybe I'm just coming full circle... a return to a small boat. Experiencing the simple joys of sun, spray, and the immediacy of fickle winds. Whether sailing at the coast or a mountain lake, my horizon is limited, about a mile or two away. I tack and I tack. And always on the third leg, I go downwind and savor the gift of age and experience. All this seems simple now, well within my reach. So is there another big sailboat in my future? Maybe, maybe not.

What I do know is this. Tami went to England, consoled Richard's parents, tried in vain to purchase the ferro-cement sailboat that Richard had built and they were to sail away on. Struggling she returned to the United States, searching for a way to begin a new life. Eventually she did. She moved to Friday Harbor in the San Juan Islands, married, and now has a couple of children. And she started up her own business, sanding and varnishing wooden boats. Is she still sailing? She doesn't say.

September 8 was the annual Delaware River TSCA Messabout at Union Lake, NJ. We were blessed with perfect weather and adequate breeze for full-sail racing in both the Melonseed and the full membership regattas. What a day it was.

First in the water, just about, were our fleet of three MacGregor Canoes. We had other boats for racing but it was a chance for Harold Bernard, Andy Slavinkas, Jenny Thompson, and myself to have a "sail in company" before the main rush. You might ask why we didn't race but the truth is, although these wonderful, portable boats are great fun to sail and paddle, compared to other, broader sailboats they really aren't very fast. We wished to save our competitive instincts for our other craft. Andy got a little wet at one point but that is not at all unusual in MacGregor canoes and it in no way reflects on the skill of the operator. He chose a moment when Jenny was ashore to check on the readiness of Tom Shephard and his crash-boat and to experiment with self-rescue.

There was a fine turnout of people and boats. An annual highlight were the introductions, when each member takes up the microphone and tells the history of his/her boat, design, building, sailing, and racing and takes questions from the audience. The diversity of our passion is really quite wonderful, each boat and owner combination is utterly unique

Andy and Jenny's MacGregor at speed.



Delaware River TSCA Messabout

By Mike Wick

Reprinted from *Mainsheet*, the Newsletter of the Delaware River Chapter TSCA

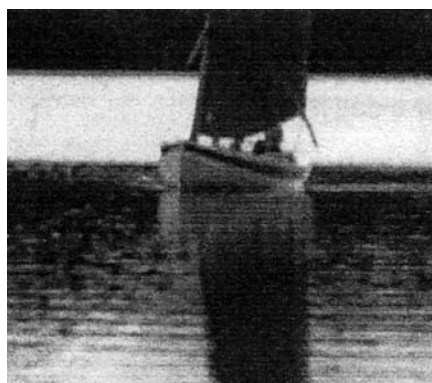
and reflects on the breadth of our hobby's attraction to each individual.

When John Guidera presented his loved and well-sailed Melonseed there was a pause in the program as we thought of our recent loss, that Tom Jones is no longer with us except in our hearts.

Onshore, sea chanties were led by Greg Decowsky and Mike Wick led the trivia quiz, won by Joe Butner. Joe gets to host the contest next year. But it was the racing:

First up was the Melonseed trophy. At the next to last turning mark there were only feet between the first three boats. It was that close. Gary Holmes and his daughters were moving fast but he had already warned me that his boat had her weaknesses. At the jibe mark he turned over. John Guidera was catching up fast and Phil and I had a ding-dong battle up to the finish. I was in the lead across the line but both of us went to the wrong side of the marker buoy. The committee boat was off rescuing Gary. George Loos warned us to

John at a quiet moment.



re-cross the line and Phil re-crossed first.

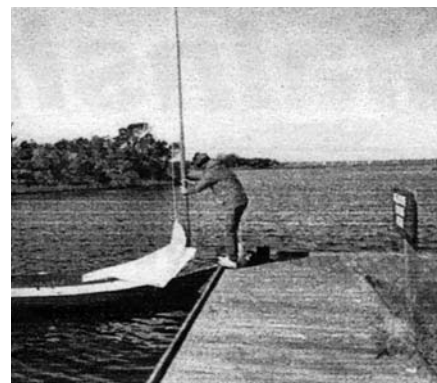
Andy Folansbee's boys were close behind so the wooden Melonseeders have only a temporary window of opportunity to keep the trophy from the Crawford hordes. Andy provides us with hot competition even when he isn't racing himself.

The general race fielded a large fleet of participants with many a close battle. The winner was Bill Covert in an old-fashioned Ultima C Class racing canoe. That he could beat such a large fleet is a real accomplishment. These are difficult boats to sail fast but Bill did it. George Loos was close behind in his Sparkman & Stephens Bluejay and then Ron Gibbs in his perennial Celebrity. Racing of this quality promises well for the fortunes of the Delaware River fleet at the upcoming Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival at St. Michaels.

Then was the rowing race. Andy Folansbee was first in his sliding seat beauty. Second was George Loos in his very fast dory. Julia King won the ladies' race and would have placed much better if I hadn't gotten in her way. I broke an oarlock and salvaged last across the line. In the paddling race it was Chuck Sutherland first, and Howard Bernard second.

Many thanks to Frank Stauss, Tom Shephard, Sharon Shephard, Pete Peters for all their hard work. Hot dogs by Sharon stoked the inner man and woman.

Phil and his Melonseed.




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Photo by Phil Dickinson.

Arey's Pond Catboat Regatta

Report from *Friends of Pleasant Bay Newsletter*

By Sandy MacFarlane

Photos by Barry Donahue & Phil Dickinson

(Below, top) 29' 1901 Crosby cat *Conjurer* bears down on the finish line.

(Below, bottom: Two 16' Arey's Pond Lynx cats broad reaching.

(Below, right) Hearle family and grandchild preparing for a good start.



Pleasant Bay, on outer Cape Cod, always stunningly beautiful, was even more so with nearly one hundred boats crossing Little Pleasant Bay on Saturday, August 11, as the 15th annual Arey's Pond Catboat Regatta began at 12 noon. This year the Catboat Gathering was sailed in memory of Alan McClellenn, a founding director of the Friends of Pleasant Bay.

Digital camera ready to capture the event, this rower found herself in the path of the oncoming boats on a downwind course and had to do some fast stroking to get on the sidelines. As the three groups of different sized classes of boats passed by, the visual appeal was more than enough to satisfy the senses but the sound was even more glorious. Nearly 100 boats passed by and the only sound was the gently lapping water on the bows as each boat glided past.

On that tack, there was little luffing of sails or clanging of rigging and no drone of motors, just the sound of people talking, laughing, hailing one another, words of encouragement or competitive bantering. The day was even more special with the sandbaggers gracing the bay with their enormous sails (see related story and photos). Check out the website of Arey's Pond Boat Yard for the final standings: http://www.areyspondboatyard.com/pdf/apby_catboatgathering_2007.pdf.

We are again indebted to Tony Davis of Arey's Pond Boat Yard for sponsoring and organizing the event that netted \$1,300 for the Friends of Pleasant Bay and \$300 for the Friends of Arey's Pond.





N-18s and Lynxs get the starting gun.



Andrew and Ann Cederbaum in their APBY Lynx head for the narrows.



Photo by Bill Welch.

Sandbaggers Support Youth Sailing Programs

Report from *Friends of Pleasant Bay Newsletter*
By Sandy MacFarlane — Photos by Tony Davis & Bill Welch

A real treat for the day of the Catboat Gathering, and for those who paid attention earlier in the week, was a visit from the *Bull* and *Bear*, two replica sandbaggers, boats that plied the more southern waters of New York Harbor over a century ago. Originally built in the 1860s, the boats were used to carry cargo, often oysters, to market. Their large sail area made them fast boats and, at the time, the fastest boat to market could set the price for the day. Eventually races were held with the boats and improvements were added to make them even faster, longer bowsprits and larger sail area. But they were tender boats and when carrying cargo the crew would actually move the cargo around to keep the boat upright. Later sand bags were used to provide the weight, hence the name. The *Bull* and *Bear* travel as a team to promote youth sailing.

We were indeed fortunate to have the boats in our midst. Suzanne Leahy of Marine Restoration and Salvage and Tony Davis of Arey's

Pond Boat Yard made it happen. According to the Arey's Pond website the *Bull* and *Bear* team raised \$10,000 for the sailing programs on Pleasant Bay. Part of those funds were raised at a fund raising event held at Arey's Pond Boatyard where people gathered to see the boats, meet Peter Kellogg, the man responsible for the vision of a traveling sailing team to raise awareness of youth sailing, meet Henry Collins, the manager of the show, and meet the builder of the boats, listen to a few speakers talk about the history of sailing on the bay, and raise funds for the current youth programs at Namequoit Sailing Association, Pleasant Bay Community Boating, Chatham Yacht Club, Orleans Yacht Club and Arey's Pond sailing school. During their four-day stay in the Bay 180 kids participated in sails aboard these beautiful boats and during the regatta Max Tringale, an Arey's Pond Boatyard employee, was the youngest skipper sailing one of the sandbaggers and came in first overall in the entire regatta!



A full complement of students onboard.

Demonstration action by the sandbaggers *Bear* and *Bull*.



Our MASCF Weekend Saved

By Greg Grundtisch

Every fall the lovely and talented Naomi and I look forward to leaving western New York to attend the Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival in St Michaels, Maryland. This year we were even more excited as it was to be only the second time sailing this season. But we ran into car problems and we thought we would not be able to get the boat to the Festival.

Naomi was especially eager to not only get on the water but to get into the sailboat race. She was very disappointed last year as we missed it due to some dubious info about it being canceled due to weather. We thought we might miss it again this year with our van's transmission going bad on the Bay Bridge. But our luck changed as Charlie Stiegerwald of the Great Lakes Wooden Sailboat Society came to the rescue and towed our little rig to the museum grounds. Naomi's face brightened as she realized she would be soon racing.

Naomi is a fierce competitor and her passion for sailing and racing is not deterred by things like we do not know anything about racing or what the course marks look like or where they are. We never did see the first one. The facts and realities of the situation don't worry her either. That we have an 11' boat, the smallest in the race, and most of the race is out across the Miles River with increasing wind, tide, and current or that big power yachts the size of houses are cruising at hull speed across said river is of no concern. She

says, "We can catch 'em, give me the tiller, damn it, what are you so worried about?" A very optimistic woman.

I'm not really into racing although I might like it better if I wasn't dodging the several dozen boats crisscrossing back and forth waiting for the starting gun to go off. The near misses were nerve racking. Or, maybe if I knew where I was going and I wasn't a half-mile behind everyone. That being said, it was a pretty good sail once we saw everyone heading in, the race ending, and we were once again sailing for the fun of it. We were the last to return to the dock almost 30 minutes later!

There was one notable incident on the return sail that a few of the slower boats experienced. A huge motor yacht came roaring in about a quarter mile from behind us. The boat was going at a speed that I would have never thought possible of a boat that size. Two smaller yachts were motoring in front of us in the channel. They created a few large wakes, exciting stuff for an 11' boat. Then the wake from the big motor yacht caught up to us before we could get turned around to take it head on. It was easily higher than

our tiny craft and caught us broadside trying to get turned into it. We shifted weight and didn't get swamped completely. We rolled with most of it but caught enough to get us quite wet.

It was a very warm day and I thought it a bit refreshing. Naomi, on the other hand, was not amused and wanted to take immediate action in response to this inconsiderate behavior. I got her to stop shouting out challenges to the offending vessel long enough to help bail out Swifty and we returned to shore without further incident. She kept shouting something every now and then about the offending skippers lineage! You get Naomi's purse wet and you're in for some trouble.

Charlie Stiegerwald and Mary McCann, his cousin and sailing companion, got Naomi eating roasted oysters. This helped distract her long enough to forget about renting a motorboat and going out to teach the aforementioned skipper a lesson in boating courtesy with the gaff hook.

Anyway, it all turned out quite well for us, thanks to Charlie's help. The overall success of the event was the result of some long hours of work by John Ford, the museum staff, and especially those who volunteered their time to make this event what it is. A real good time, at a real good place, with some exceptionally good folks. Thanks to you all.

Happy sails!

Charlie Steigerwald and Mary McCann in their Herreshoff Columbia sailing dinghy.



Naomi and I in our 11' Swifty.



Them Days are Gone Forever...



At home, I woke up Saturday morning, September 22, with a cold. Hate a summer cold. Worse, it was supposed to be the start of my annual trip camping in my rowboat, the *Loon*, on the Chesapeake. The *Loon*'s a 21.5' lugsail gig, four rowing positions. This is the same boat that was called the *Kate* in my last year's saga (*MAIB*, May 15, 2007). There's no name painted on it so we waffle some. Kind of depends on whether we're calling it after my wife or after me. Looks like I'm winning.

Our home is in Bridgewater, Virginia, in the Shenandoah Valley, three-and-a-half hours from our cottage at Fairport, near Reedville, Virginia, where I keep the *Loon*. I decided I'd "old man" it; i.e., start late, drive slow, not row too hard, stop early, and most of all make myself some means of boiling water so I could breathe steam and sip hot, hot water. So I slept in and Kate brought me coffee in bed, usually that's my line.

Leaving Bridgewater (population 5,500) I saw yard sales all over the place, must've been our fall yard sale day. The third one had an old copper kettle that would do just fine, gave him \$3 for it. Stopped again at the WalMart in Tappahannock and bought two cans of Sterno and a lighter. At the Food Lion in Heathsville I picked up two styrofoam cups of add-hot-water-and-eat soup, some packs of Ramon noodles, and a large can of southern spiced collard greens. In the cottage kitchen at Fairport I boiled water, drank some, and breathed steam. Then I ate the greens and applied an old style can opener to the can to make a sort of stove, see the photo of my objet d'art. Now on the boat I could slip a Sterno can into my stove, light it up, and put on the kettle!



Got everything stowed on the *Loon*, oars, spars and sail, awning tent, stove, see the checklist in the separate panel. I planned to sail from Saturday to the following Friday, when Kate was coming down with Dave and Tina, a couple we've been close to for 35 years and more, to go sailing in the *Meander* (a Crealock 34) that weekend. But I'd taken the day so slow it was too late for me to start out that night. Besides, my throat hurt. I put the *Loon* back up on its roofed lift, took a Benadryl, and sacked out in a comfortable bed.

Sunday

Woke at 5:30, breathed steam and drank hot water. Our place in Fairport is on the Great Wicomico, just across from Sandy Point. I lowered the loaded boat into the water and headed out. Winds were supposed to be from the north at 10-15 knots all day. At 6:00 there was hardly a breath, I rowed in the peace and quiet, leaving barely a ripple on the lazy, glassy water. The breeze picked up as I cleared Ingram Bay (the mouth of the Wicomico) so I raised sail and decided to head across the bay to Occohannock Creek leading to the great metropolis of Belle Haven.

Cruising with a Cold on the Chesapeake

By John Fairfield

At least it showed as a large yellow incorporated town on my one chart, similar in size to other eastern shore towns like Cape Charles and Onancock. On another chart Belle Haven was conspicuously absent. Didn't matter, heading out across the widest spot in the Chesapeake it's easy to get lost, maybe I'd get to that creek and maybe I'd get to another. By the time you cross to the other side and are looking at creek mouths that you've never seen before in the haze it can try your dead reckoning, your chart reading, your eyesight for markers and headlands, and your luck.

Mid-bay, I'd just gotten through the shipping channel, beating the container ship but not the tug and barge, when I decided the wind had really picked up quite enough. My throat was scratchy and I was getting wet from a lot of spray. So I figured I'd just drop sail, put the kettle on to boil, and put a reef in. The waves were too big, with the sail down the boat rolled heavily and the little stove and kettle fell over, and I forgot to put the parrel on before raising the reefed sail. By the time that was all sorted out I'd drifted south into the shipping channel (it runs NW-SE there), but there was nothing coming. I donned a rain jacket, the one I got on the Norfolk Broads (*MAIB*, September 1, 2007), put on the parrel, and raised sail. The jacket gave much comfort.

The eastern shore began to take on shape. You can kind of tell where the creek mouths are. Funny how when you're there, and you see stuff, it can be really hard to match what you see to the chart. But there's a tall marker [R46] at the south end of a long straight stretch of shipping channel just off Occohannock Creek, it really confirms my understanding nicely.

I approach the creek from the north and, like most creeks on the lower eastern shore there's a long entrance channel coming up from the south, guarded from the bay by a long sandbar. I try sailing over that sandbar to spare me going around the south end and then coming back into the wind, which is still from the north at 15kts. I make it over the main bar but once I'm in more sheltered water I cut one corner too many and I feel the dagger board scrape, pull it, then the rudder starts scraping. The boat is really moving fast.

I hurry aft to pull the rudder, of course my weight makes the rudder scrape even more and it's hard to pull the pintles from the gudgeons. I get the top one out but the bottom one's still engaged. The force of the boat bends the bronze pintle, not too much but noticeably. I get it out with a jerk and lose it. Of course it floats. I drop sail, get out the oars, and go back and fetch, then row over the shallows to a duck blind standing in about 18" of calm water where I tie up. The wind is fair for going east up the creek but I'm really trying to keep things slow. If this cold blows up on me the whole trip is in trouble and I'm a long ways downwind from home. So I row into a more sheltered spot, the duck blind was still pretty windy though protected by salt marsh, and anchor in one foot of water.

I didn't have a blessed watch. Had a cell phone that I planned to keep turned off most of

the time so I could check in with Kate daily yet have it last the week, it would tell me the time if I turned it on. Had a handheld VHF radio to listen to marine weather, they tell the time once per cycle. I try to call Kate, leave a message, it's only 1:30. I'm worried a bit about the cell phone, there was salt spray collected in the bottom of the plastic tub I'd kept the cell phone in, dumb thing to do. I take the battery out and lay it all out to dry. I boil up some water, take a nap, and write some. Not this log, I'm working on something pretty serious.

Rowing is great for seeing where you've been. The new stuff surprises you and you can see it up close and personal, but as it drifts back you gain perspective.

It gets fine and hot, must be 85°F. When the sun starts to get lower, around 5pm maybe, I row slowly a mile up the creek, find an even more protected spot in the lee of large trees, and anchor for the night. I watch the nearly full moon rise a couple hours before sunset, write some more, boil water, and fill one of my styrofoam cups of noodles. The hot food feels good in the sinuses. The weatherman says no chance of rain so I don't put up my awning, just sack out.

There were some stars I'd forgotten the names of that I'd looked up in Google Earth before leaving Fairport. They go in a big arc across the sky starting with Algenib in Perseus, then Almach and Mirach and Alpheratz in Andromeda, which brings you to one corner of the great square of Pegasus where the arc is completed by Sheat. The other two stars in the square are Algenib (different star, same name as Algenib in Perseus) and Markab.

I lie there renewing my acquaintance, trying to work those names back into my memory. There's the three "als," a nice right triangle made by Algal (in Perseus), Algenib and Almach; then another star ending in "ach," the miracle Mirach; then there's the dominant rats (Alpheratz) and Sheat (knew a farmer once who got a lot of satisfaction out of a quiet, slow rendition of that word). Wake up in the middle of the night realizing the terrific dew has soaked all the way through my sleeping bag. I'm not cold and I'm able to avoid doing anything about it and get back to sleep.

Monday

The morning is fine, the air clean, the sky tawny before dawn. I boil myself some hot water, drinking from the styrofoam cup left over from the noodles. Gives a bit of flavor. I realize I've left my cheese, baby carrots, and some spinach in the fridge in Fairport. I have visions of ham and eggs for breakfast in Belle Haven, four miles up the Occohannock. And soap, I've forgotten to bring soap. Tide's coming in, I row up the calm creek. Of course it's an estuary, but around here they're called rivers or creeks.

Looks like a nice little marina on the north side, Davis Marina, and across from there I see an intriguing side creek entrance. The chart calls it Fisher Cove. The side creek comes out under a little bridge that is built up high enough so that I can row under there. Unusual in these low lying parts to have such a confined creek entrance that it could be bridged. So I explore the creek, it's a nice setting, not a big creek but very sheltered and not too much civilization, one home that has a big boathouse, a few skiffs.

There are huge homes on either side of the Occohannock as I approach the road that crosses it at Belle Haven. Go under the bridge, tie up on a dilapidated landing against

the bridge mole, looks like it might be high tide, looks like it might be 9:00. I walk up the road into town. There's maybe a half dozen homes, no store, no post office, no church. On the chart it showed the incorporated area extending inland to where this road would T into another, maybe that's the center of town. I ask someone getting into a car whether there was a store where a body could get breakfast farther up the road. They say yes, a couple miles, at the corner store, they think they do breakfast. So I hoof it, past incorporated soybean fields. Come to think of it, I could really use a bathroom, too. Eventually I get to the intersection, there's a typical clapboard southern country store on the corner, looks like just the ticket.

Inside things have changed a bit. There's coffee and an incredible assortment of Mexican sweet breads and some groceries. The owners are a Pakistani couple, she's behind the counter, he comes out to explain why there's no breakfast service any more. We get to chatting, he says the locals only come in at the end of the month, that the only thing that keeps him open is the Mexicans who come through sometimes by the busload for the tomato harvest. Says that this morning was typical, he'd had maybe three local customers that day so far. While we're talking there is the occasional customer, all Mexican. He says the previous owner had told him that back in the timber days there were three stores.

I ask about a bathroom. He says there's a portajohn outside by the diesel tanks. I go out, it's old and hasn't been serviced in a long time. The splash is, um, vari-colored. I go back into the store and ask where I can wash my hands. He says there's a hose spigot back by the diesel tanks. I ask is there soap there? No. But I need to buy soap anyhow and he does have soap for sale. I get a bar, go out to the spigot, wash up.

Go back into the store and fix a cup of coffee. I ask if he's got any cheese, he says he carries it normally but is sold out and graciously offers to get me some from his own kitchen. It's packaged individual slices of process spread. I thank him but I don't take the cheese. He says he doesn't eat it either, just his kids. I eat some pecan sandies, finish my coffee, pay up, and head back towards the boat. There's a cell phone tower sporting a dozen vultures on the way back, suits me.

At the boat the tide is higher than when I came in and turned to ebb. So I figure high tide for 9:30 or so. I spread out my bedroll and damp things in the boat. There's little wind, I row. On my way back down the creek I stop at Davis Marina. It's neat, has good but limited services, more of a place to go to get a boat fixed than a pleasure yachter's place. Mr. Davis is knowledgeable, ran a marina in the Caribbean for many years. He says low tide at the mouth will be 4:30 or so, I think it will be earlier since I thought high slack five miles from the mouth was at 9:30. The weatherman promises 5-10kts E to SE wind all day, so I plan to head north up towards Onancock.

I don't want to fight the tide, on this coast the current is strong, so I dawdle at the marina, it's only 11:30. I plan on heading out at slack low. I row slowly down the creek, anchor in the shade of some pines, and eat and snooze. I try to call Kate and realize that the cell phone is not responding well, it gets funny marks on its screen, then nothing at all. I can't call. Around 3:00 I put up my mast and head out the mouth of the creek. At the mouth I toss

the anchor near where I went aground coming in, put in the dagger board, and find that I can't get the rudder's bent pintle into the gudgeon. But I put the bent pintle against a cleat and whang on the rudder a bit with my fist and it straightens just fine. I raise sail, I get into less protected water, and lo, the wind out here is NNW, about 10 knots! What to do, I can't tack NNE towards Onancock well, this lugsail rowboat doesn't point like a racer.

But I head out over the bar anyway, and with the wind to starboard can just point that nice tall marker (R46) on the end of the straight section of shipping channel. I get on out there and think, hey, if I can't do Onancock (eastern shore) I'll do Deltaville (across the bay, western shore). It may be late before I get there but I love night sailing. I'm gonna have a great moon, the weather is super fine, why not? As I get out towards the shipping channel I can't point the marker any more, the wind is dropping and the tide is still dropping me south. A mile past the marker I finally give up on sailing, I'm dead in the water and still being carried south, it must be nearly 5:00pm.

So it's drop mast and out oars. I soon am too hot, my clothes feel muggy. I fix that problem kind of radically, the sun is lower now and won't burn me. The sea is moving but glassy, the water is deep and clean dark green, the temperature is perfect, I'm bathed in a kind light, the rhythm of rowing gets into my blood. The sky is so clear the jets don't leave any contrails and move slowly and silently and seemingly very close. The benediction of the planet is upon me. I row for several hours in profound silence, nothing but the occasional monarch butterfly disturbs the solitude. Amazing how they cross the Chesapeake, nay the Gulf of Mexico, such little rags of nothing. The near full moon slowly climbs up out of the eastern horizon, I've got a first row seat.

Finally the sun goes down, the water reflecting loops of tawny sky. After sundown I put some warmth back on and along comes a menhaden boat heading home to Reedville, the home base of the menhaden fleet on the east coast. She passes astern of me, all lit up. Then a tiny breeze follows, finally from the SE. It rapidly strengthens, I up mast and sail and am soon boiling along under the eastern moon and fading western light. I shortly have to reef, this time remembering the parrel, and sail to the NNW to get up into the mouth of the Piankatank in 15kt wind. I quit sailing at the red #8 marker off the end of Fishing Point, row up (SE) into the lee of Gwynn's Island, and anchor just off the shore to be in quiet water. I boil water, make some noodles in my styrofoam cup, and sack out under the moon.

Tuesday

In the morning it's totally socked in with fog, I can't see 150 yards. The bag is sopping wet again and I resolve to use the awning tent tonight regardless of the fine weather. I should have brought along my 4'x8' piece of heavy tent canvas, that would have been just right. I boil a couple of cups of hot water, sip them gratefully, then row quietly west along the Gwynns Island shore, feeling my way in the fog. I spot a woman out sprinkling her lawn (yes, at 7:00am in the fog, it's really been dry) and ask her if the Seabreeze, a restaurant by the bridge onto Gwynns Island, did breakfast. She says it does, starting at 8:00.

That gives me lots of time to row around to the restaurant, passing the concrete hotel that recent hurricanes have reduced to dereliction, the rotating bridge, and just nipping into Milford Haven before turning to the Seabreeze. I tie up, jaw some with some guys putting a boat in at the ramp, and settle down on a bench to wait. A car comes in and parks and a waitress goes in, says they'll be open soon after 8:00. Then more staff. Then a couple of regulars come and walk right in, they're not into waiting so I follow. We all sit around one big table. The Seabreeze I know well from long ago, my brother-in-law and I used to keep a Chinese junk moored off the Seabreeze. Made in Hong Kong. We'd come down here with all our kids and a few more and make like boat people. That's a whole long story which maybe I'll tell another day.

So they ply us with coffee and the regulars all know each other and some of them have apparently been part of the same police unit, most are retired now, and they get telling old police stories. One of them was/is some sort of head man and he's a real talker, has to top everybody and really dominates the air waves. Turns out the restaurant owner's sitting with us, too. The waitress soon comes and is real nice and takes my order for eggs over light and fried tomatoes and whole wheat toast and more coffee. The owner and his wife remember our Chinese junk real well. They remember how the locals always wondered how an old wooden boat could sit for months on end at a mooring with no power and never settle on her lines an inch. Like I say, maybe some day I'll reveal all. The owner lends me his cell phone. I call Kate and have to leave a message, at least now she'll know my cell phone's dead.

So I finish up and head out, the fog's starting to burn through and I row to Jackson Creek in Deltaville across the Piankatank looking for a marina where I can take a shower, dry out my stuff, and set up my tent. I'd not set it up this year yet and I wanted to make sure everything would work right. Also, I wanted to make another phone call. I stop at the Deltaville Marina, it's real nice, the people let me park my boat in a slip, spread out my stuff to dry, get a shower, and loan me a bike to go into town, all for \$5. There are a LOT of boats and marinas in Deltaville.

I head into town to the grocery store, and BOTH West Marine stores(?!). I stop at an antique store because my faithful little red plastic cup has developed a crack so I'm looking for a mug of some sort, and I look for dinghies for sale because I want my grandkids to learn to sail. I get some cheese and spinach, some algaeicide for the diesel tanks on the *Meander*, but all the mugs I find are ditzzy and the price of new and used dinghies is astronomical and I realize that the deal I've been offered on a Nutshell pram back near Fairport is a lot better than I had thought and I should go with it.

Back at the marina I sort out my tent on their lawn. I set up my stove on a stonewall around an ornamental tree and boil water for tea and noodles. I realize I've left a piece of tent gear behind, a prop to hold up the ridge rope over the little foredeck. But I'm at the right place, the marina's carpenter (this is a FULL service marina) makes me one out of a bit of scrap in a few minutes, charges me \$3. I set the tent up on the boat to check that everything works, repack it in its bag, take a shower, stow my stuff, and head out.



The wind is 15kts from the SW, I figure either I'll just go around Stingray point and come in the other side of Deltaville on Broad Creek, or maybe I'll be able to sail up past Windmill Point if all goes super quick, the sun is setting. I row into the wind for a while to stand off from the shore, then tie up to a crab pot and put up my mast and reef my sail. When I start to sail my centerboard hits sand, still too shallow to sail, and the waves are surfing up. So I drop everything and row across the wind, always a bit of a pain when the waves are breaking, and try to figure how much I can cut Stingray point. In shallow water in waves I'm a careful rower. A few years back I caught an oar in the sand when a wave hove the boat, the oar bound in the oarlock and cracked the gunwale.

Finally I figure I can turn downwind, and surf into the Rappahannock. It's getting dark and I decide to spend the night in Broad Creek so I row that way, downwind (which has turned up the Rappahannock), and following the rising tide. I notice a 30' sailboat with genoa up heading into the very narrow channel into Broad Creek. The channel runs from a green flasher SW towards a red flasher in the creek mouth, there are a few unlit red markers in between. Then I notice that the sailboat isn't moving and it looks like the wind and tide have carried her west of the channel.

There're two guys aboard, the one at the tiller seems to be doing everything. I row past his stern, he's clearly aground, is running his engine hard, but is still headed west as if he thinks the channel's that side of him. I holler that he ought to drop sail and that the channel's back the other way. He drops his sail

and can pivot and moves east a boat length, but then says he had better luck going west and turns back. I leave him and head in, pausing by the nearest unlit red marker to shine my flashlight on it so he can see how far off the channel he is, 50 yards or so. Maybe he was already on the wrong side of some tailings, I don't know.

I get into the creek, it's solid with marinas, I mean there's nothing left but slips and boat sheds. I row around in the dark awhile before I find a tiny vestige of unmarina'd creek, too shallow, I guess, toss my anchor and pull my tent over my sleeping things. I leave the tent flat; i.e., I don't raise the tent ridge rope yet, it cramps my movement and I've got water to boil. I have a cuppa, watch the stars awhile, get out one of those little tab lights and write some, standing in the boat. Lift the rope onto the upended daggerboard, climb into the tent, and sack out. Can't see the stars, but it's snuggly in there and I sleep dry.

Wednesday

Get up when the moon's still a handbreadth and a half from the western horizon. Moon appears perfectly full. I figure the sun should come up maybe 20 minutes after moonset a couple hours from now. Take tent ridge rope off daggerboard and remove daggerboard, leaving tent collapsed over sleeping things, hoping it will have a chance to dry later in the day. Make hot water. As the Sterno gets used up you have to stir it before lighting else it won't stay lit. I think that'll be the last hot I get out of that can. The thing I least like about camping on a small boat is the endless moving of stuff to get at other stuff.

Row out through marinas silent in the dark. Halfway out the Broad Creek entrance channel I head east to sneak along in the lee of the shore before hitting the wind, which methinks will still be strong from the SW. No sign of the sailboat that was aground, they got off somehow. The moon gives enough light to spot a crab pot, I tie up to put up my mast. Remember the parrel, I'm not taking that reef out. Get mast up and all ready to raise sail, cast off and row out to the end of Stingray point. Raise sail. Where's the wind?

The waves are maybe one foot but they show no signs of recent wind. The dawn horizon glows from purple to red to tawny, the moon sets while there's still a wedge of darker blue earth shadow above it, my 20 minute estimate is going to be about right. I loaf along in 4-5kts wind, reefed, reveling in the light on the waves, deep marine and buff and pink. Split the difference between Windmill Point and its light, course NE. I see windows back on Stingray Point flash fire, turn and see the fireball emerge from the horizon. Houston, we have ignition.

I take the reef out. The seagulls are mobbing a menhaden boat doing its thing off Kilmarnock. A lone dolphin passes me heading away from there, I wonder what the score is on dolphin in those purse nets. The heavy aluminum skiffs that circle the net get hoisted onto the big boat and it moves off towards Reedville. I debate whether to head to Tangier on the 10kt SW wind or go on up the Gr. Wicomico and explore the headwaters. I've never been as far up there as the boat could go. I decide I haven't done enough rowing this trip and head for the Wicomico.

A pod of dolphins follow me into Ingram Bay, rolling just under the water beside the boat, eyeing me not five feet away. I always sing to dolphins, um, more of a low

pitch hoom, hoom repeated whenever one surfaces. When in Rome, hey? Whales go hoom hoom, right?

I sail past my place near Fairport just across from Sandy Point, don't want to stop. I don't want to break the spell of the trip. I sail slowly up the Wicomico in about 4kt wind, it is hot and I am warm and content. This trip has had so much beauty, the calm, the sunsets and sun rises, the moon, the thick limpid water, the brightwork of the boat, the dolphins.

I sail some, row some up the Wicomico four miles or so to the bridge. It must be near noon. There's a boat builder there, Nick England, who did some repairs and changes to the *Loon* last winter and he's the one who told me about this nutshell pram for sale. Nick built it. There's a sort of informal club of guys who have built prams with some tutelage from Nick. They get together on Friday afternoons and race them on the Wicomico at Nick's place. Anyway, since my cell phone's died I no longer have the phone number and name of the guy who's selling the pram. Nick's not home and a neighbor says they're off on vacation for two weeks.

This neighbor really helped a lot lifting the *Loon* into Nick's shed last winter. He's sort of retired and is very busy in his marine engine repair shed. I tell him about needing to get in touch with Nick to find the pram man. I go back to the *Loon* and head on out but as I clear his docks the neighbor comes out and shouts. I row back, tie up, and walk up to the shed. He says he called Nick (I think he's protective of Nick, my cell phone used to have Nick's cell number, too) and he's gotten the name and phone number of Bill, the guy with the pram for sale. He lets me use his phone to call Bill and I leave a message.

I row through under the Hwy 200 bridge and while I'm raising sail a sudden gust carries me into the pilings of a new marina under construction. I bounce off, amazed and gratified at how resilient that boat is, then sail up the river a couple miles until the water starts getting very shoal. You can tell it's really soft mud if you don't hear the daggerboard scraping at all but the boat just won't point up, much less come about. I drop sail and mast near Cedar Point and continue under oars. I see someone working on his boat at a dock on the southern shore, row over and ask him if he's got a cell phone. He does and he graciously calls Kate for me and leaves a message that I'm alive and well and way up the Wicomico.

The sun's getting low. I get up to a broad pool where the river branches into two creeks. I go up the southern fork. Broad shallows, the oar vortices stir up mud, there are huge carp with their dorsals out of the water, rolling in water that's about 10" deep. I expect that kind of activity out of carp in the spring but this is September. They make heavy Vs moving swiftly across the surface.

The sun sets. I'm counting on the moon coming up in 40 minutes or so. I continue up the creek, it's just a swamp drain by now, the tide is low, it meanders and even with my 5" draft I have to search out the deeper spots. Fallen trees jut out into the stream, some of them been there a long time, their smooth reptilian shapes spooky in the twilight. Surprised small fish jump clear of the water, one bangs into the side of the boat like a hockey puck, hard. A big snapper moves through mixed mud and water, her shell and snout showing, she moves like a mole with broad sweeps of her feet.

Finally the stream splits into two very shallow bits, the mud is thin enough to row with the oars but too thick to permit the boat to move without great effort. I can just turn around.

I row back to the broad pool where the river branches. I'm not done yet. Fearing bugs, I want to spend the night down in the broader river but I want to check out that other headwaters branch first and I'm counting on that moon coming up soon. In the gloaming I head up the northern branch which trends NW. PVC pipe stakes mark the "channel" for skiffs only. Homes still border the stream from time to time but the docks become more and more ramshackle as the stream gets smaller.

There's an area on the surface the size of a small swimming pool where tiny fish spat the surface making it look and sound like big drops of rain are falling. KRAAAK, KAAAK, KRAAWK, great blues can about startle you right out of the boat. Where's that moon? Finally the stream fails, too narrow to row or even pole, wholly spanned by branches. It's seriously dark, I pole back out to where I can turn around. As I rowed up I'd noted where all the nastier logs in the channel were, now I try to recognize those bits by the profiles of the trees against the slightly lighter sky and feel my way cautiously past. The moon finally comes up, big and serene in the trees on the northeastern side.

I make it back to the pool where the river branches. Here there's still quite a bit of SE wind, so I move on down and find a place in the lee of a high bank on the southern shore to anchor for the night, just below where the guy made a phone call for me. I settle down gratefully, get my cookery started, have a cup of wine, relax, and wham, there's this terrific splash right behind me. The beaver surfaces, head cutting the surface like a seal's, and swims large semicircles around me, back and forth about 40' from the boat. Guess he wasn't expecting anybody looking him down the back either.

Try turning on my cell phone, the screen doesn't light up at all but it makes a beep. I try dialing Kate's number blind and get through. We talk briefly, I tell her I can't trust the phone at all especially since I think that beep was telling me the battery's low. I make the last of my noodles, drink some hot water, say good-night to the moon, raise my tent, and sleep.

Thursday

In the morning I sleep in a bit, then get up and boil water and drink, there's still way too much snot in the works. I row slowly down the river, exploring every little creek on the way, I want to make a total survey of every creek in the watershed. There's a dead deer floating bloated in one, not a particularly appetizing sight. In the mouth of another creek there's an interesting phenomenon, the water is fairly still but light coming off tiny wavelets gives the appearance of swift moving waves traveling at highway speeds.

I feel draggy. I decide to leave the rest of my survey to another day, and from Blackwells Creek I row slowly down the river. As I near the Hwy 200 bridge I turn on my cell phone to try to call Bill, hoping to arrange to see the pram this evening or tomorrow. The screen's still blank and they're not in but I can leave a message. I row against the increasing wind, still SE. In some stretches I can get some relief hugging the southern shore but most of the river is dead upwind. The wind isn't that strong but I'm not

as strong as I ought to be. As I get into the cove sheltered by Sandy Point I follow the south shore around the cove in the shelter of the trees. Then I cut from Sandy Point across to home. I beach the boat, unload gear, take it up to the house, and spread things out to dry on my back porch.

End

Let's see if I can tie this off. I get through to Bill and go see the pram Friday morning. I'm delighted, it's got a new Stu Hopkins sail that's much better than the original. Bill's knowledgeable and friendly and has a repaired rotator cuff so doesn't want to

risk sailing anymore. I bring it home on the roof of my minivan. Kate and Dave and Tina arrive Friday evening, we have a great time sailing on the *Meander*. About two weeks later I finally go to a doc and get an antibiotic and in three days feel much better, thank you. Then Kate and I come down to Fairport with our two youngest (we have four sons) and their wives, and the pram is an instant hit. Peter and Andrew head off with it, asking no questions, figuring out the rigging as they go, it's comic at first but they soon stop pirouetting and check out Cranes Creek and have a great time. Much is well with this corner of our unjust world.

What you need to go camping in a rowboat on the Chesapeake in September and have my tastes

Equipment

Boat awning/tent. On fair nights, a piece of tent material 4'x8' to keep the dew off is all I need.

Sleeping bag and "fleece" sleeping bag liner, often the latter is all I need. Two self-inflating foam sleeping pads, one is too thin, I hate hard spots.

PFD.

Anchor and bucket of rode.

Another bucket with a natural sponge.

Spare oar.

Means to boil water, tea kettle, Sterno, stove, lighter.

Two small plastic laundry tubs for loose gear and food.

Roll of paper towels.

Three 1gal jugs of water.

Loose Gear

Compass (2).

Can/bottle opener, corkscrew.

Watch.

Polarized sunglasses.

Sunscreen.

Handheld VHF for marine weather reports.

Chart(s) that cover not only where I plan to go, but also where the wind might take me. I don't argue with nature in an open rowboat.

One of those magnet+coil+LED shake-it-to-power-it flashlights. Beautiful to keep in a boat, it's all the nav lights I've got, dependable, waterproof, floats, there's enough rocking going on in a small boat that I can keep it on in the tub so it's easy to grab if I see a boat

coming. Just keep it away from my compass.

A couple of good, high quality bungee cords.

Knife, spoon, cup.

Notebook and pen.

Electricians tape.

Band-aids and white waterproof medical tape.

Soap.

Cell phone, but they really don't like salt spray. Keep it in a ziploc.

A GO-LED tab light, great for reading at night, get them at Target. You pull a little plastic tab to turn them on and if you're careful you can reinsert the tab to turn them off. They last a looong time.

Reading glasses.

Benadryl, enteric baby aspirin, ibuprofen.

Food

Cheddar cheese.

Whole wheat bread.

Several one-quart foil packets of dried milk.

Rolled oats.


Spinach.

Baby carrots.

Cans of herring steaks (sort of sardines).

Ramon noodles and two of those noodles-in-a-styrofoam-cup things. Once you've used one, you can reuse the empty cup to make ramon noodles. If you have two, you keep the empty one nested over the unused one, an empty styrofoam cup doesn't last long on a rowboat.

One of those cardboard boxes containing a plastic bag of wine with a spigot.



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I arrived in Sanford on Lake Monroe, not liking the crowded streets or Lake Monroe. I drove north to Hontoon Island State Park. After talking to a ranger about where I could launch and leave my van and boat trailer, I drove to Holly Bluff Marina. After checking out the prices there, I drove to my room for the night, the Wal-Mart parking lot in Deland. My van is equipped for comfortable camping and I have saved a lot of money on this trip by staying at their Super Centers while on the road. Since they are open 24 hours I always have facilities available. In the morning everything I need to provision is right there.

After doing my shopping I drove the seven miles back to Holly Bluff and launched. Went the half mile by river to Hontoon Island SP and docked at their very nice facilities. The docks were free during the day while exploring the island, but if I wanted to stay the night the fee was \$13.50. There are some nice hiking trails on the island. One leads to an old native shell mound, one of many in Florida.

After seeing all I wanted to on land I went upstream a few hundred yards and turned into the Hontoon Dead River. This is a beautiful place, made more so by the fact that all the big boats stay out. This makes it easier to take in the great scenery. I noticed many great places to anchor for future use. After about 11 miles I came to a very small, shallow canal that leads back to the St. Johns about three miles south of Blue Springs State Park. Right when I entered the St. Johns I saw big gator about 12' long.

A Winter in Florida

By Bob Slimak

Part 3

Moving downriver, which flows north, being one of the few north flowing rivers in the US, I turned off at Blue Springs and beached next to other boats there. I walked around and found there were quite a few manatees there as the weather had been cool. It was warming up that day, however, and after seeing that there were people swimming who said the water was great I went back, changed to my swimming suit, and grabbed my mask, fins, and snorkel. When I swam up the spring run to the spring, I came upon a group of divers in a class on cave diving. I was able to get in all the surface dives down to the opening I wanted while they were getting their class work in.

Then I waiting around to see them dive into the spring. The opening was not very big, maybe 3' at the widest place, and about 8' long but much narrower for most of it. There was bit more but a fallen tree blocked it. It sure was weird watching them go down and disappear. On woman could not do it and came back up quickly. The instructor came up and talked to her and she tried it again, but came right back again and stayed up. Can't say as I blame her. Diving where there is no surface and air overhead is not my cup of tea either.

Leaving the Blue Springs I was going slowly as there were many manatees around. About a mile downstream all of a sudden the boat was lifted partly out of the water and listed to starboard. Fortunately I was driving with my hand on the shift/throttle and immediately threw it out of gear, knowing it had to be a manatee. It apparently just had to surface right under me. I followed it for a couple of hundred feet but it was acting normal and there wasn't any blood, much to my relief. I kept my hand on the throttle for a long ways away from the spring area.

Continuing downriver I quickly reached the conclusion that the St. Johns is a fantastic cruising area. There were large wading birds everywhere and gators, too. Big gators. Boat traffic was a lot less than on the ICW and I found many totally out of the way anchorages. Most of the western side of the river is taken up by the Ocala National Forest then, south of Lake George, the eastern side is taken up by the Lake Woodruff Wildlife Refuge. There are small creeks going off the St. Johns into the refuge and the area is almost primal. Birds and gators everywhere and no place to go ashore to walk as it is a thick tangle, jungle like.

I anchored for the night in one of these small creeks, or rather tied to overhanging branches. Four feet away the mud bank was well packed and looked like a well used gator spot. As the sun set and darkness took over I started to hear a wild screeching. Very creepy. Looking around I thought, "Creature from the Black Lagoon."



Dock at Murphy Island Conservation Area.



Beached at Blue Springs State Park.

Lake Woodruff Wildlife Refuge.



Backwater living on the St. Johns.





My "Creature from the Black Lagoon" anchorage.



Limpkin, green heron, great egret, ibis, and rear end of snowy egret.

I awoke in the morning, nothing having gotten me, to see all kinds of birds having their breakfast. Wonderful to watch while I had mine. I was able to take a photo that had five large wading birds in one frame only 50' away. There was a Limpkin, a Green Heron, a Great Egret, a Snowy Egret, and an Ibis. While I was taking the photo a flock of eight Wood Storks flew overhead! It turned out it was the Limpkins making the creepy noises the night before.

As I was in no hurry to get going I made myself another cup of coffee while watching nature's show. The Great Egret seemed to be confused as to species. It seemed to be interested in the Ibis. Whenever the Ibis moved, so did the Egret, staying within a couple of feet. Eventually they all flew off and I had to leave also. I had to pick up my friend, Doug, in Palatka in a few days.

Cruising out of the refuge area back into the St. Johns, I continued north to Lake George. Just before getting to the take I came upon a small sand beach and a sandy shore area with palm trees at the north end of Blue Island. Yea! A place to go ashore and stretch my legs a bit. Granted, I could always stop at one of the small towns or fish camps but I always preferred a more natural setting. I decided I might as well have a break and made coffee. After getting through the shoals at the south end of the lake it is 9.5 miles to the other end.

The lake can be tough but wasn't today. Very calm. Since the marked channel is right down the middle there isn't much to see as the shores are a long ways away. I didn't like Lake George any better than Lake Monroe. To me they are both essentially big holes filled with water. What I mean by that is that they do not have a lot of bays and no islands that I could see. I don't find much of interest in large expanses of open water which is why I am not a blue water cruiser. For me the interest is where the water meets the land. That is where the greatest amount of nature is to be seen.

Anyway, finding the lake not to my liking, I decided to waste gas and got across in 45 minutes. Once across I found a whole string of marinas and fishing camps that seemed to be the extent of Georgetown's riverfront. Past this the river returned to its scenic beauty. Passing Welaka I saw it had a city dock, but needing nothing I just filed that away in memory for future possible future use. Since it was getting dark I tucked myself into the northeast corner of Turkey Island for the night,

The next day I came upon the Seven Sisters Islands which is another beautiful area to anchor between the islands. Again, many birds and gators and large turtles, too. I counted 19 lined up on one log alone. It was here that I came across a 15' gator that moved so fast off the bank into the river, kicking up a big wave, that I decided I had to be really careful about staying away from them if I was in my 11' canoe. Best to take the bends out near the middle. Fortunately, the water was deep enough that I could pretty much go right up to the banks and didn't need to use the canoe to get to shore,

Downstream there was a large horse-shoe bend in the river with a bascule RR bridge, the Buffalo Bluff Bridge. Try saying that three times in rapid succession for proper radio procedure when calling for it to open! Since both sides of the bridge had great cruising grounds I passed under this bridge five times during the next week. Good thing it was already open for three of them.

Around the bend was large Murphy Island, a state conservation area with another great cruise in the small channel between the island and the eastern shore. They call this Murphy's Creek and the guidebook refers to the common mouth of Murphy's and Dunn's Creek but it is really just a channel while Dunn's is a real river. Many nice places to anchor there also. At the end of Murphy Island is the turnoff into Dunn's Creek. The book says that it is not as shallow as formerly reported and that the minimum depth in the creek and across the bar into Crescent Lake is 6'. This is an understatement. I found very few places as shallow as 6'. In fact, this creek was much deeper than the St. Johns River. I found depths over 50'! It does go down to 6' at the bar, however, but one really need not worry about water depth when cruising this 10 miles.

Side canals are something else though. On the way in I stopped off at the Georgia Boys Fish Camp and quickly put the trolling motor down. Drifter has a fairly large turning circle with the outboard but with the bow mounted trolling motor I can turn her in her own length. Very handy and whole lot cheaper than a bow thruster. I bought the Motor Guide with the wireless remote and both foot and hand controls. The Minn Kota's have to be retrofitted at an additional \$150 cost for remote. Using the hand control, which clips onto one's belt and has a wind tip line like some key fobs, I found it enjoyable to cruise small, shallow waterways while sitting on the

roof for a better view. I sure wish someone would invent better storage batteries as this means of propulsion is sure nice. The people at Georgia Boy's were very friendly and helpful. They even gave me a ride to the store and back.

Soon it was time to get back to the St. Johns and up to Palatka as my friend Doug was supposed to be there the next day around noon. He's one of the many people who hate cell phones so I could not call to find out where he was. As it turned out he didn't show up until 10pm, but no problem as Palatka has a free city dock and now and then I do like a little civilization. As always, the boat draws people to talk to which also gets me info on the town. Had a nice walk, cleaned up the boat, emptied the garbage and filled the water tanks while waiting.

After provisioning the next morning we took off up river south. I had found a dock at the Murphy Island Conservation Area with several mile of paths for public use so we stayed at the dock that night after hiking the island. The next day after cruising around the area we found ourselves back at the dock for a lunch stop, then on to the Seven Sisters again.

After a few days retracing my route back south we got to Lake George and found it was very rough this time with high west winds. I have never been seasick, lucky me, but since Doug can get sick he had taken a Bonine earlier. Still, to make the crossing easier I took the back way around Drayton Island to the lake, then stayed near the western shore. Even then it was a rough crossing. The eastern side of the lake must have been really bad.

We stopped at the sand beach again then went back around the north end of Blue Island and into a creek behind a small unnamed island. We followed this as far as we could go, then turned back about 200' to a wider spot and anchored for the night. Woke up at first light with branches brushing the cabin side. The anchor wouldn't hold in the soft muck and we had dragged that 200' feet back until the boat got hung up. The funny thing is that we somehow dragged right down the middle of the very narrow channel around a bend. I anchored where I did because I had thought that if the anchor didn't hold we would only go back about 20' and end up in a patch of marsh grass. Oh well, the anchor had kept the boat upstream so I just put the trolling motor down and went back to deeper water before stopping again for breakfast.

Did I mention that the trolling motor, sitting between the hulls, doesn't have to go down lower than the hulls as the outboard does? This means I can go in whatever will float the boat. I have a 16' push pole also.

Continuing the reversed route we got stopped for a break back in that same spot on a creek in the Lake Woodruff Wildlife Refuge where I had anchored before. I got a good laugh as Doug, after taking a look around, said, "Jeez, Creature from the Black Lagoon." After several more days taking

him through the areas already described, including the Hontoon Dead River and Blue Springs we went back to Holly Bluff Marina and pulled the boat out. We then drove back to Palatka where Doug picked up his car. Thus ended the St. Johns River exploration. We now headed for the Florida Panhandle and the Ochlockonee River.

One more aside. While tied to shore for the night in the Hontoon Dead River we had a Limpkin stay within 20' of us for nearly three hours. It would go into the water, pick up a

snail, walk a couple of feet up the bank, eat the snail, drop the shell on the ground, and repeat this over and over. At the end of three hours there was quite a pile of shells. Having recalled the hike to the shell mound across the way on Hontoon Island, I started to wonder. The park says the shell mound is the result of a thousand years or so of native people living there. Since the only shells I saw on the hike were snails, maybe it was a thousand years of Limpkins living there. There goes my perverse sense of humor again, sorry.

(To Be Continued)



Anchorage at Seven Sisters Island area.

Great egret.



Dock area at Hontoon Island State Park.

Gator in Murphy's Creek.



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Sailing the A-Cats

By Wendy Byar

(Reprinted from *Mainsheet*, the newsletter of the Delaware River Chapter TSCA)

On September 26 John Brady invited the Delaware River TSCA out sailing on the A-cats. The day was sunny and hot with a nice breeze. We assembled at deRouville's Boatshop in Tom's River, New Jersey. The group split into thirds with Ingrid, John Brady, and Bill deRouville as captains. We piled onto Henry's leaky RHI to go out to the moored cats. Someone piped up, "Hope the Coast Guard doesn't see us now," so my son (an off duty Coastie) closed his eyes.

The first group disembarked onto *Witch*, a dark purple hulled wonder built by Bill deRouville in 2002. *Witch* is a beautiful boat with a finished cabin and a stereo system. She has full-length benches in her friendly cockpit. That group was off their mooring and sailing before the next bunch disembarked onto *Wasp*, built by Tom Beaton in 1980 and one of the first "new" boats since the 1920s.

Wasp has a slightly longer rear deck with the tiller mounted on the deck instead of inside the cockpit. She is a traditionally built boat and, like her sisters, carries no ballast except for a crew of live weight. The rail meat all sit facing outboard with their feet hanging over rather than the usual hiking out position. This feels very civilized. Also, about half the crew will walk in front of the mast on a tack.

The last batch hopped onto *Torch*, built by John Brady in 2002. We slipped the mooring, leaving the workboat there



for the ride home later. None of the A-cats have auxiliary power. Everything on these boats is scaled up from our usual small craft. The sail battens are all longer than I am tall. The massive centerboard and case splits the cockpit in two, but as soon as it is down the space becomes more congenial. The boats sail fast with the rail in the water and there is a heavy weather helm. I was just able to hold it when my turn came at the helm. Steering *Torch* was the best part of my summer. What a rush 600 square feet of sail provides.

I had been privileged to be part of *Torch's* crew for two races in July. Both those times I was responsible for one of the running backstays. The single 46' wooden mast has

two backstays. On a tack or jibe one backstay needs to be released while synchronously the other must be hauled in. The boom is almost 30' long and swings with a lot of force on a jibe. On our cruise we tacked each time, a much safer maneuver for the boats. As we were sailing around *Tamwock* came out to join us. She is sailed by the Ocean County College Sailing Club. It was fun to see four A-cats out sailing together.

Thank you John Brady for the opportunity to experience these great boats and a bit of Bay heritage. The Workshop on the Water is building a new A-cat and we'll visit sometime this winter to see its progress. *Silent Maid*, the B-cat, can be seen on live webcam at <http://www.phillyseaport.org/boatshop:webcam>

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By the time our elder son Josh reached high school we had outgrown the Snark. The boat's strict 320lb (145kg) weight limit, printed on a little aluminum plate glued to the mast partner, forbade everyone but our younger son Zach to sail with me. I was the only one of us who felt comfortable at the helm so Frann and Josh couldn't sail at all. So I declared the old Snark obsolete and started thinking about a new boat.

I considered the affordable options for a production sailboat that was big enough. There were none. A Doughdish, the fiberglass-hulled version of the Herreshoff 12½ in which my grandfather had taught me to sail, was roomy enough for all of us to sit upright. Beamy but seaworthy, it was very popular on Buzzards Bay for the breezy waters for which Mr. Herreshoff designed them. The Doughdish's tidy gaff rig and abundant brightwork stirred deep appreciation in my sailor's heart. But it was expensive, had a deep keel which prevented trailer launching, and needed a mooring. Frann and I could not have afforded a car that cost what a used Doughdish sold for.

A Bullseye, the all-fiberglass version of the old 12½, would also have worked, but the cost was similarly high. Likewise, a Beetle Cat would have floated us all. But the storied wooden boats were neither affordable nor very comfortable for older teens and their increasingly creaky parents.

My first thought was to buy a partly-built boat from a fickle do-it-yourselfer. Answering an ad here in *MAIB*, I bought the hull frame and plans of a Karl Stambaugh-designed Chesapeake crabbing skiff large enough for us, the "Windward 15." I also ordered from other advertisers in this august bi-weekly all the necessary silicon bronze fastening hardware and epoxy. Readers, these purveyors treated me well and the cost was within budget, so they share no blame for what followed.

I managed to get in a hundred hours of stolid but acceptable craftsmanship. But as the calendar sheets flew off the wall and our two-week vacation came fast upon us, I came to the painful conclusion that I would not complete the job in the hours and days available. I made a thorough list of all the tasks remaining and estimated the time required to be about 200 hours. I resolved to spend a few hours each weekend from August to June and sail it the following summer.

Once summer vacation was over the backlog of chores was followed hard by a busy few weeks at work and months of weather inhospitable to outdoor boat building. So the painful realization hit me that fall that my lack of time, pep, and sheltered space were not likely to produce a finished boat even by the following summer. If we were all to go sailing again before the boys went off to college, we would somehow have to get a hold of a bigger boat that was ready to launch. Yet lacking the means to buy one, I was stuck.

"I just want to go sailing," I said to Frann repeatedly. "I don't want to scarf the chins." This expression, taken from one of the directions on the Windward 15 plans that had mystified me at first, had become a code term between us for the carpentry of boat building. An end in itself to many builders, this was too hard and frustratingly slow for my limited woodworking skills.

Late that November a tragic event spurred me to a new decision. Scott, a friend

Snark Bytes:

The Snark's Retirement

By Rob Gogan



Last sail in the Snark.

and colleague of mine, was killed in a mountaineering accident. Thinking hard about our brief tenure on these mortal shores, I realized how disappointed Scott would be in me if my life were to be similarly snuffed out before I did a whole lot more sailing with my extended family. The words of one of his eulogists also struck a chord. She said that Scott had explained his need to do risky climbs in the context of his family life. "I like myself better when I climb," he'd said. "I can be a better husband, a more patient father, and a more relaxed co-worker if I've gotten the need to climb out of my system."

I figured I, too, would be happier with my family, and my family with me, if I had gotten a sufficient dose of sailing. So with these lessons in mind, I decided to borrow the money from a home equity line of credit and buy a suitable boat. I ran this idea by Frann who heartily endorsed this plan. Immediately I went upstairs to my shelf of old *MAIB*s and scanned the most recent ads for used boats.

I had noticed a pattern of sales by owner-builders. Many of them seemed quite knowledgeable, skilled, and passionate about boat building. So they used the finest materials and lavished attention on all details in bringing their boat plans to life. But once launching was over, many of them were seized by the desire to build a boat that was a little bigger, faster, or shallower in draft. The boat they had spent so much time and money on was no longer the apple of their eye. These owner-builders would often put the boats up for sale at low prices that barely covered the cost of materials let alone all the hours of love and labor they'd lavished on their craft. So there were (and still are today) bargains to be had at prices a small fraction of the production Doughdishes and Beetle Cats of my dreams.

The designer whose owner-built boats had most often caught my eye, within and beyond the pages of *MAIB*, was Phil Bolger. I was charmed and impressed by his comprehensive appreciation and understanding of the small details of small boat sailing in all

waters and conditions. On the internet I had found Chuck Merrell's excellent Micro site, www.boatdesign.com/micro. The page hosts Bolger's description of a fictitious Micro cruise called "The Lovers." The Micro was small enough to trailer sail but large enough for some coastal cruising.

The little cat yawl seemed to pack a lot of options into its 15½' frame. Owner-builders raved about the cabin with ample room to sit up, high freeboard for choppy waters, plenty of canvas enabling a respectable four-knot clip, a hefty though shallow keel for stability without deep draft, and an amazingly large and comfortable cockpit for its length. One owner claimed he could daysail six adults in reasonable comfort. I had also briefly spoken to a wealthy old salt who once owned a Micro he had loved to sail but had sold in favor of a bigger blue-water cruiser. So I was sold on Bolger's Micro and I started scanning the web and eagerly flipped straight to the classifieds whenever *MAIB* came out, hoping for a Micro posting. Within a scant few weeks, an ad for an owner-built Micro popped up. The boat was in a town only about 10 miles away.

David Jost, the seller, had poured lots of time and attention into his handsome craft. He had documented it all meticulously, with a detailed account of expenses, craftsmanship, solutions to problems, and, best of all, abundant photographs. There is still one posted here, www.mysite.verizon.net/vzeokhsb/index.htm. I didn't blink at David's price in view of the well-documented money and hundreds of hours he'd put into her. She was just exactly what I wanted. So I gladly paid David what he asked.

The Snark I sold to a friend whose wife and daughter wanted to learn to sail. I made her a new polytarp sail and tinkered a little to make the hardware more seaworthy. The Snark is off now at a lake in Pennsylvania, providing a new generation of a new family with a fun, safe introduction to sailing.

In our family, we have a tradition of going boating every Father's Day. We usually explore a local lake or river by kayak or rented canoe. That year we trailered the Micro down to Phinney's Harbor on Buzzards Bay and launched for a quick sail. We could do several things impossible in the Snark. We all could sit comfortably in the cockpit with room to spare. When nature called, we could go below to use the camping toilet with perfect comfort and modesty. My elder son, with a heavy burden of homework, was able to go below to work on his algebra assignment. Best of all, from my viewpoint, we were spanking along all together at once, neatly and safely, cutting through the Buzzards Bay chop that would have swamped the Snark with any load at all.

Frann asked if I was happy. Then, and many more times since, I said, "Well, if you were ever wondering why I wanted a Micro, this is exactly what I had in mind," making a sweeping gesture with my hand that took it all in. "Are you happy?" I asked Frann. "If you're happy, I'm happy," she said. What a lucky guy, I thought.

A little of my happiness was tempered by the realization that it took the tragic death of my friend Scott to bring us to this moment. Scott, wherever you are, I wish you the eternal joy of climbing the rugged faces of celestial mountains. As for me, my idea of heaven is here on earth, sailing a Bolger Micro along the shores of Buzzards Bay with my family.

"Time flies when you are enjoying yourself" is a cliché, yet when a real estate lady said to me one morning on the ferry ride to Portland from our home on Cliff Island, 50 years after my first visit to Cliff, "I am going to show someone a house for sale on Cliff Island tomorrow, do you want me to show yours, too?"

I replied, "Why not?" I could not believe that I had been on Cliff that long, off and on, anyway.

Martha and I had talked about this possibility from time to time, however, without giving it serious consideration. Now that we had finally made our summer cottage into a cozy year-round home we were pretty well settled in. Sure, the hour-and-a-half ferry ride to Portland schlepping groceries and kerosene had become a chore. I was definitely no longer as "rugged" as in younger days (if I ever had been "rugged" in the first place).

Depending on the time of the tide, with the resulting pitch of the gangplank of the ferry, the brake mechanism which I had attached to the dolly contributed much to the ease of offloading but the heavy load still had to be carted to the house, no easy job for an octogenarian. The occasional need to go to Portland just for the purchase of only some little unplanned item turned into the loss of a whole day because of the ferry schedule. It usually was evening by the time we got home.

Other matters, such as a change in the island population due to illness or death, resulting in loss of friends and neighbors, lack of tie-up space in Portland harbor if we used our own boat to commute, added to a sense of dissatisfaction with island life, something I never before felt in younger days.

So the next day the real estate lady knocked on the door with a potential lady customer in tow. This lady was familiar with Cliff Island and impressed with our house, which was located right on the water with its own wharf. She decided to buy the house. This was in the month of October that year.

Living on an Offshore Maine Island A Proven Method How to Become a Boat-o-Holic

By Hans Waecker

Farewell to Cliff Island



Farewell to Cliff Island after 50 years

We had no idea where to even look for another place to live. It was fortunate that the lady intended to use the house only for a summer home. She let us stay in the house until May the following year. This gave us a break but it was also convenient for her, we kept the house warm, she did not have to worry that

the plumbing would freeze up during the winter had the house been unoccupied.

Now the search for a new location was on. No matter where we looked, at lots or existing houses, they all had features which we did not like or which would have required extensive changes to suit our tastes. So we decided to start from scratch and build a new house. Eventually we found a spot on another island, Georgetown, this one bridged to the mainland. Even though we did not really consider a bridged island a "real" island, we bought a five acre lot in the middle of the woods. No more views over the water all the way to Mount Washington as on Cliff, but we had only a short trip to Reid State Park on the open ocean.

During the next months until May plans were underway as to how we would move all our "stuff" over to the mainland. The simplest, but also the most expensive, way would have been to hire a barge and ship everything over in one trip. The manner in which we handled the whole affair was actually more reminiscent of the Keystone Cops. We loaded all our belongings into big crates on coasters from the Casco Bay Lines, a few of them each day, and then shipped them to Portland on the ferry. From Portland the contents went, via rental truck, to a storage place in Woolwich. This scenario was repeated frequently. Some of our boats were hoisted onto the ferry. It looked as if they were flying rather than sailing. Some of the furniture suffered some dings.

The day finally had arrived for the last shipment but also the sadness of saying good-bye to all the friends and neighbors. We definitely had mixed feelings which were made tolerable only by the knowledge that our daughter Eva-Maria still has her cottage on the island.

Our friends often ask us if we miss Cliff Island. The answer is yes, of course, but the feeling of nostalgia comes most frequently when we visit with those of our new neighbors with property right on the water, like we had on Cliff.

Fast Martha, a Monhegan skiff, nested inside our Bolger designed Delaware River TSCA Messabout



Our "flying catboat" *Bobcat* goes aboard the ferry.



"Aahhh, I can teach you to ski," said Mike.

"Uh-huh," I answered, as I have answered dozens before him. They all think that.

The epic journey began in Canada when I was 15 years old. Every summer my family left the sultry south to cool off on the beautiful glacial Lake of the Woods in Minaki, Ontario. My grandfather kept an Evinrude Sportsman there and we spent many hours relaxing in the Canadian sun and filling our livewell with wall-eye, which we fried over a campfire built on the granite shores. At night we shared fish stories with the Owens, a family we knew only because their annual vacation always coincided with ours. That summer the Owen children had suddenly become adults and had pulled a Ski Nautique from their home in Chicago.

"You all will have to come out with us to tomorrow and ski," they offered. My brother and sister and cousins cheered. I simply raised my eyebrows and smiled. Everyone else in my family, it seemed, had skied before. I had heard stories of my mother skiing the Canadian waters when she was younger and evidently my brother and sister had skied at a summer camp they had attended. My cousins owned their own catamaran so I was not surprised they had experience.

The next day was bright and sunny and I had fun flying over the deep waters of the lake in the Owen's big, fast boat. I had come with no real intention of skiing. There were enough people that I figured I could get lost in the crowd, escape unnoticed, and enjoy the sights and sounds and smells of the landscape. But it was not to be. The Owens found out I had never skied and they considered it a gauntlet tossed before them.

"You'll be up in no time."

"Really, it's easy. The boat practically skis for you."

"Besides, the water is so cold you'll have to get up!"

The four Owens, my brother, sister, two cousins, and our fishing guide waited patiently while I struggled to pull on the skis that were as shiny as the boat. I could not believe how hard it was just to hold them straight long enough to get my feet in or how slippery they felt. I wondered how in the world I was to stand up in shoes three sizes too big and slick as oil. My abs were cramping and the first star of twilight appeared before I finally unwrapped the rope from around my neck, forced the ski tips up-right, and gave the "thumb up."

The boat shot forward like a race horse out of the stall, my arms popped out of my shoulder sockets, my feet slid out of the rub-

Mike's 1957 Richline Runabout

By Jennifer McGehee

ber shoes like greased pigs, and my face slapped the water so hard I was sure there would be blood.

"That was great!"

"Good job!"

"You almost had it!"

"You ready to try again?"

Were they kidding? I never, ever wanted to try again. But Rob Owen was cute and I did not want to look like a spoilsport, so I nodded good-naturedly and waited for the rope and skis to get delivered to me. I was all arranged by the time feeling returned to my cheeks and eyes. My hands trembled when I gave the next "thumb-up," but to my surprise I actually rose out of the water a little before I face-planted.

"Great!"

"You had it!"

"Okay, third time's a charm!"

The third time was the charm. It was the time I learned that once I got upright the rope loses its slack and I lurch forward and bust. Period. No exception. Ever.

The next person who wanted to be my hero was my 18-year-old deer hunter, wide receiver, firefighter boyfriend. He could get me up. Before he let me try, however, he made me watch him slalom though a race course behind his best friend's dad's Phantom until the spray he made as he swished in and out of the pylons cut burns into his calves. I suppose he did this for my benefit, so I could know just what an expert I had at my service. Under the careful instruction and expert boat handling of two teenage boys I only crashed a few times. They were not as patient as the Owens and wanted to slalom some more, so I was let off the hook a little sooner.

Later it was my fiancée's older brother's group of buddies. One of them had borrowed his father's Sunscape for the day and I remember there being a raft of rafts and coolers. Like others before them, when they heard I had never gotten up on skis, they donned their red capes and blue tights and put their feet victoriously on the grab rails.

"We can teach you to ski!"

"No problem!"

"Here, just drink a few of these first. You won't feel a thing."

My future sister-in-law skied like Esther Williams in MGM's 1953 musical, *Easy to*

Love. My fiancée was (to me) breathtakingly beautiful on skis, and he even drove the boat for his older brother and the other heroes who could ski and drink beer at the same time. And me? I fell on my face again. And again. And again. I was young then. My body hardly noticed it had been yanked and jerked and slammed and slapped in the hot sun. Now I'm 43 and have had two kids and Mike thinks he can teach me to ski.

"Just bring some sandwiches and I'll take care of the rest."

I agreed, thinking my kids would relish the opportunity to spend a day on a boat and that they and my husband would ski so much I would never have to. Mike had other ideas. "Bethany Wagler learned to ski last week. You can do it."

"Uh-huh," I said again, with no intention whatsoever of trying.

I was curious to see Mike's boat. I knew he built boats as a hobby and that he had even sailed around in one he had made. He was so confident that we would all be able to ski behind this particular boat that I thought it must be a big, powerful boat indeed. Surely it must exceed the Ski Nautique and the Phantom and the Sunscape. On the agreed upon day we found him waiting patiently by the dock, his nylon boating hat barely visible above it.

I was more than a little surprised by what I saw. This boat sat low on the water, lower even than my grandfather's Sportsman. And it looked older than my grandfather's boat. Maybe older than my grandfather. Mike was proud of his red craft and welcomed us aboard. "So what do you think?" he asked.

"This is nice," said my husband.

"Very cute," I said. It was cute. A little red boat with just enough room for the five of us. I had serious doubts about its ability to pull any but the most experienced skiers. If the Owen's Ski Nautique couldn't get me up, nor my boyfriend's friend's father's Phantom, nor my husband's brother's buddy's father's Sunscape, how was this little thing supposed to?

Mike told us the boat had belonged to his grandfather "way back when." His grandfather had sold it to his father, who had sold it to him. A 1957 Richline runabout, this boat was a long-time member of his family. When he told me a lot of people had learned to ski behind it, I believed him. I just thought they were probably people from ages past when people were smaller than we are now. Mike was a gracious host and a patient instructor. He puttered around the lake a while, looking for the perfect water for us. When he was finally satisfied, he turned and asked who wanted to go first. I looked at my kids.

"Brock, how about you?" I offered. He was up in about 15 minutes. Next I volunteered my husband. He had forgotten a few things over the years and took two attempts to get upright, but once he was up he looked like the same guy I had watched adoringly 22 years before. When it was time for my 11-year-old daughter to try, my husband gave her some instructions.

"Okay, Bethany. It's just like when you push me off the bed with your feet. Push against the skis like that."

It was an epiphany to me. A revelation. How come no one ever told me I have to use my muscles when I ski? All those years I thought I was supposed to glide on top of the surface like a water strider. I had been trying to let the water and the speed and the skis do the work, trying to yield to them all rather than conquering them.



My daughter was up after three attempts and she skied for about 15 minutes or so.

"Okay!" I said as my daughter climbed the three-rung ladder into the boat. "Who wants dinner?"

"Aren't you going to have a turn?" asked Mike.

"I'm fine, really. Thanks."

"Oh, come on. I promise you can do this."

"Come on, Mom! You can do it!"

I tell my kids all the time not to cave in to peer pressure. I hope they are stronger willed than I was. I sighed and pulled on the sopping, cold, way-too-big life jacket and jumped in the lake. I don't even really like to swim. It's too much work and I get a little chilly, both things I try to avoid as a matter of course. I didn't know what made anybody think this was going to be any different than my other three dozen attempts, but the boat was small enough that I figured it couldn't do too much damage and that with a few days of prescription anti-inflammatories I would soon recover from whatever injuries I was about to incur.

My son tossed the skis into the water. They were as... well... charming as the boat. They were wooden and still had most of their blue paint. Someone should have made every person who skied on them sign them with permanent marker. I bet there were hundreds.

Will three falls be enough attempts so that my kids won't think I'm a quitter? I wondered. Three would be enough to wear me out and earn me a good night's sleep, anyway. I thought about my husband's advice as I waited for the rope to come round. PUSH with my legs. I was actually eager to try.

I gave Mike the thumb up and he pulled back on the throttle. I held on. I pulled. I pushed. And I was up! And on the first try! I skied until I was tired and let go of the rope. I did not have the whiplash I expected and my nose did not burn from being filled with lake water. Later I took a few ibuprofen and hardly noticed the lactic acid in my arms and legs and back and stomach.

Mike was all smiles and genuinely happy for me. He didn't gloat or boast that he knew he would be the one to get me up, just asked if I had fun and if I wanted to go again later. I attend church with Mike, that's how I know him. He is always generous about inviting people to join him on the lake and many friendships within our little church have been deepened by our time together on his runabout. We've laughed and played and broken bread with all kinds of people from all sorts of places: Darren, whose parents are Chinese and who grew up in Hong Kong; Ulrika, who came back from Germany to visit a few weeks last summer; and, best of all, Mike's pretty wife who came here from Russia in 2005 to marry him.

Mike sold his boat last spring because, he said, he was finished with it and did not need six boats. I was sorry to see it go. I told him it was the end of an era for us and I am thankful I got to be a part of it. I would be thankful whether I had ever gotten up on skis or not but that memory does make all the other memories a little sweeter. And I am glad it was Mike and my husband and my children who got to be my heroes. And I'm glad, after the failures of all those fancy ski boats, that it was Mike's 1957 Richline runabout that got me out of the water.



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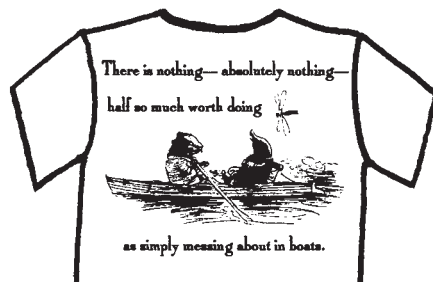
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I'm pretty sure I saw little *Tir na Nog* the other day as I drove past the breaker's yard and peeked through the slats and chain link fence where the nice folks from the Port of San Diego impound, and ultimately crush, boats that their armed and badged officers determine to be antithetical to the commonweal. *Tir na Nog* was a good little boat. I bought her for less than a third of the \$1,500 asking price she had borne unsuccessfully for a couple years. She was a "donation" boat. One that somebody else had given up on, then consigned to the local broker's less than loving arms. She had sat for at least two years sandwiched into a slip jammed with other no longer loved vessels.

I wasn't technically in the market for a small cabin sailboat during those years. But on walks about the marina I checked on her from time to time. Had I been in the unlocked cabin? Certainly. Had I sat at the tiller and considered her probable behavior under differing wind and sea conditions? You betcha. Did I like her? Yeah. Was she in rough condition? Only her mother would love her. And, well, I did, too, I suppose. Pretty rough.

The original equipment, burgundy vinyl cushions were still there. Some of the sections still had a little cush to them. The old muslin bottom panels were pretty far gone. But she had good bones. And pretty good lines. I particularly liked the reversed transom. My first cabin boat was a little Brit job by Russell Marine, a Vivacity 20. She had that same reversed transom. I guess I imprinted on that feature early on. We males are so easily attracted to a fine transom.

But, back to *Tir na Nog*. I had picked the name off of a sweatshirt a friend of mine wore to my Navy retirement ceremony. It means "Forever Young," or some other Peter Pan-ish kind of sentiment. Capitol Yachts made a few of them in the '60s. They were way too expensive for 20-footers. Probably why not very many were built. Sure, they had berths for half a football team. But c'mon, 20' just isn't enough long to permit enough wide to carry that many posteriors around with any dignity.

Dreamline underway, spades and fins can run on rails, too.



Two Pretty Good Boats

By Dan Rogers

Actually she could carry a few butts around but the cabin took up most of the load carrying part of the hull. And I have yet to meet a whole lot of people, at least those who come sailing with me, who actually request that they be wedged into the "seating for four" dinette while we thrash around and heel to 30 degrees. Anyhow, she was drawn, based upon my own visual studies, by Gary Mull probably during the Santana 22/Ranger 23, evolutionary period. Just my theory, as I could find very little documented info on the design when I went looking, back then.

As an "as is" boat, the little Newport 20 lacked a few essentials, like sails. And little boats are never donated with operational motors. So for the first trip to a new home I sculled her with the rudder, across the marina basin, to an available side tie slip. This particular slip was down a long tunnel in the lee of the fishing pier/seawall, and thence around a corner and over a sandbar, and thence down a long and narrow ribbon of water bounded by the long dockway on one side and riprap on the other.

No, I didn't have a motor. The wind behind the fishing pier shifted 180 about every 20' and with that really short mast, sailing into this slip wasn't real satisfying. Of course, getting up enough momentum to drag the keel over the sand bar added a bit of low tide amusement for the spectators walking and sitting on the strategically placed park benches. Then, after negotiating the long final channel, the terminal 180-and-park took a bit of moxie as well, mostly to avoid running into the pedestrian ramp.

As soon as possible I got another slip and an electric trolling motor. It just, this minute, occurred to me that I have kept that same sailboat slip for three boats, and about six or seven years now. It is one of those public ones. It

sits at the end of a long fairway, and right in front of the bar/restaurant, store, marina office, and various walkways. I normally come in and do an all-standing hockey stop under sail. The little N-20 was superb for this sort of landing. I could charge down the long,

outboard motor and BBQ intruded, fairway at 5 knots or more, put her into a side slip at the last moment, and step off as she gently settled against the pier. You know the deal.

The absolute worst thing that can happen to somebody doing this maneuver is for some well-meaning fellow to run up and grab the pulpit out of fear that you are going to crash headlong into the dock. I have upset many a do gooder with, "please don't help... the boat knows what she's doing... but thanks, though." A handy little packet. But after a while I went looking for something a bit more exotic.

Now equipped with new sails, running rigging, and such I placed an ad in the local paper. Got my price. And I shook the guy's hand. He was excited and I thought she had gone to a good home. I saw *Tir na Nog* (with some, more-prosaic, other name displayed on that perky little transom) out on the bay from time to time over the next year or so. Then, one night about six months ago, as I was coming into the only legal anchorage available (you're supposed to have a permit) for weeknight use, there she was. Anchored just out of the prescribed trapezoid, no lights, and apparently unoccupied. I was pretty sure she had been left on the doorstep.

As I got underway at sunrise before the boys and girls with the badges and guns show up to check papers she was still swinging listlessly. I felt both sad and angry. How could anybody do that? Even if I had a place to put her, the authorities hereabouts don't actually want anyone to rescue a boat once she's been impounded. It has to do with the Starbuck's crowd's sense of purity more than anything else. They use the word, "eyesore" a lot, determined mostly by the absence of commas in the purchase price, I'm certain. But damn it., she was a good little boat. No granite counter tops. But, a real sweet little boat.

The more exotic replacement for *Tir na Nog* had lain just up the same dock we live on for a year or so. I had sailed a San Juan 24 once, for part of a day, about 20 years before. Of course, over that many years a boat tends to get smaller. You may have discovered the same phenomenon. Anyhow, *Dreamline*, pure and simple, was a thoroughbred race horse. The guy I bought her from had spent an embarrassingly large amount of cash on new sails. The expensive North main was finer than just about anything I had ever owned. There were a couple of mylar and tape jibs that I carried around in royal splendor, neatly folded and stowed, for the first year. They were just too good for the likes of me, I guess. Kind of like some people who put doilies over the slip

Tir na Nog, four's a crowd.



covers over the cushions of their furniture. You know, to keep them nice. Anyhow, that boat had so many sails, I had to store some of them ashore to make room for people.

As I recall, there were 20 control lines led back to a horse over the companionway hatch. Twenty! Those boats came stock with four halyards led internally through a complex mast step to a battery of turning blocks. Let alone, the shooter sheet led internally through the boom and plethora of spinnaker spaghetti. Winches and sheet stoppers sprouted all over the cabin top. Granted, the cockpit drains had to be plugged when underway due to an extremely (IOR-deformed) pinked stern. And San Juan 24s are the absolutely, no comparison, most tender boats I have ever sailed. The maximum waterline beam could be less than a cubit. The bow entry is not only hollow, its needlelike. *Dreamline* would simply fall over to 40-45° heel angles and then stiffen up.

What I'm leading up to is that even with all the spaghetti coiled everywhere, even with the restricted cockpit space and tenderness, even with a no longer fashionable, IOR tormented, hull shape, *Dreamline* was one damn fine sailboat.

She topped out at about 6 knots with plain sail. But with correct adjustments on the outhaul, vang, main halyard tension, mainsheet traveler position, batten pre-cambering, backstay tension, jib halyard tension, and barber haulers she could go just about anywhere you could point her. Did I say I was looking for something more exotic?

There has never been a boat that I couldn't improve. So after about a year I had every control line rerouted or decommissioned or combined. Of course, the port-a-potty had to give way to a regular head with holding tank. In fact, at this juncture I came into possession of an electric toilet from a much larger boat. She became known as "Lectric Loo" in some circles. The pinup battery lights gave way to installed fluorescents. The rudimentary electrical and water systems morphed into something more exotic. And so on.

At the height of this slide toward decadence I could be out sailing on autopilot with all the control lines within reach from my normal watch station, slouching in the companionway. So the obvious next step was a seat that fit into the duck board slots, more like an inverted saddle, to handle the

extreme heel angles. From that seat I could reach the autopilot remote dodger thingie, the coffee cups and swing stove, VHF radio, stereo, GPS, and relevant electrical panels. I could tack and gybe without leaving my seat. Basically I was sailing by wire. Other than the technical challenge, things had gotten pretty far beyond the normal messing about in boats stage. Yes, even I had to wonder where the sailing left off and the space ship took over.

Perhaps *Dreamline's* biggest drawback turned out to be the pinched-up cabin. Other people sail these boats in offshore races with several crew aboard. But I just kinda wanted a bit more space. Oh yeah, and a toilet not under the V-berth. So after about 3,000 nautical miles together I sold her to a rich guy who was going to take her home to Puget Sound. In fact, she was destined to ride a mooring only a couple miles west of the factory of her birth. The last I saw *Dreamline* she was loaded on a trailer behind a new SUV with a waterline longer than hers and Washington plates. I do hope he doesn't let her end up in the breaker's yard.

Those were two pretty good boats.

It's funny the way some ideas won't go away. I've been following with interest the one-sheet dory articles appearing in recent issues. Back around 1980 I, too, designed and built a one-sheet dory, this one to be propelled with a double paddle while sitting on a pad on the bottom. It was intended mostly for kids and was great fun to build and use. Our son Sasha used to scoot around Echo Bay in it with great confidence and élan. I drew up plans and placed an ad in the late lamented *Small Boat Journal*.

That autumn, my wife Joanie, Sasha, and I moved aboard our 1935 Richardson, *Sweet Anarchy*. We brought her way up a backwater to a marina in New Rochelle, NY, for the winter. It was a cold winter, we had a woefully inadequate stove, and we were pretty broke. It snowed a lot, too.

On the bright side we had a great community of liveaboards as neighbors and a beautiful old powerboat with lots of windows in a grand and sunny pilothouse. Most of our liveaboard friends lived in dim, dank caves in the bowels of their tarp covered fiberglass sailboats. And best of all, from a financial standpoint, every couple of days would bring \$10 checks for my double paddle one-sheet dory plans. That little boat kept us going all winter.

I don't remember how many sets of plans I sold (it was a surprisingly large number) but what I do remember are the sometimes amazing letters I received from builders. Now keep in mind that "Baguette" (that was her name) was a tiny boat. In a millpond a 10-year-old leaning over the side to grab a frog would be unceremoniously tipped out.

A fellow from out west somewhere wanted to use the tiny dory as a drift boat for fishing. I had this mental picture of one of those brawling rivers in Idaho and a 200lb angler all outfitted for steelhead fishing. Yikes! And then there was the nitwit who asked about installing an outboard. Well, plans sales finally petered out and I was delighted to move on to designing more able small craft.

We moved *Sweet Anarchy* back onto our mooring as soon in the early spring as we could, rowing back and forth to shore. No, not in the little dory, we had a nice Whitehall. But we did keep "Baguette" on the cabin top

Remembering a One-Sheet Dory

By Dan Marcus



for an occasional paddle. We left her there the next year when we shipped out on the 22-ton gaff tops'l ketch *Fourth of July*, but we took along the Whitehall.

There's an interesting end to this story. We kept the Richardson as a sort of summer cottage when we moved ashore, the little dory still onboard. A few years later we re-located to the Mystic, Connecticut, area when I went to work at Mystic Seaport and somehow "Baguette" came along (now a little battered and leaky) and ended up in my parents' basement in nearby Noank.

After a few years of it filling up with junk down there my pop asked what I wanted to do with it and I told him to just put it out with the trash. It disappeared and I figured that was that. Not so. About a week later, while on a walk through the village, I spotted it, freshly painted and full of flowers on the front lawn of a house. And there it remained for at least a decade until my friend Lynn bought the house and sent the rotted bits of plywood off to the dump.

I poked around the other day to try to find a copy of the plans. No luck, but I believe Mystic Seaport has the plans in their collection. They have all the designs I did when I was in business as Echo Bay Boats in the '80s and I imagine I included the one-sheet double-paddle dory. If not, no matter, every decade or so someone else comes along and re-invents it.



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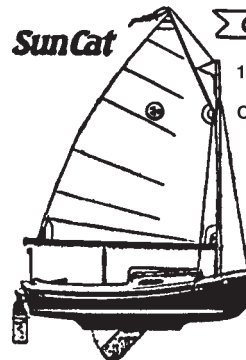


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I consider myself a boat builder for that is what I love to do, even though I am now working on only my seventh boat. Time is precious and there are many other demands but the idea of building my own boat (canoe) brings close to the same joy as does using it. I can watch it take form and become just the boat I want, always with a few minor flaws, but it will be mine and from 10' away it will still look good. I follow tradition only if it makes sense to me, considering modern technology, and I try not to follow someone else's plan. Just about everything I do is an experiment and it's fun that way, usually. That attitude has worked well for me most of the time but when it becomes part of my passion for boat building the result is an occasional bad boat. One such experimental result was the Brown Canoe, the result of a failed effort to design and build a good looking and really light weight boat.

The Fate of the Brown Canoe

I have, or had, a not very good canoe that I built. We always called it the Brown Canoe, nothing fancy, but what else would you call a natural-finish walnut canoe? To say a boat was a lot like the Brown Canoe was not a compliment. It had hung for years out of the way overhead in the garage, kept around for nostalgia I guess. It was intended to be a super lightweight canoe with ash ribs and a thin, strong covering of walnut veneer and fiberglass. It was meant to be based on the Rushton Wee Lassie design. The idea was to make a "traditional" rib pattern with narrower and thinner ribs more widely spaced, replacing planking with veneer and canvas with fiberglass and resin. This should result in a lot less mass and, of course, the Wee Lassie shape would make a beautiful boat.

Because the Wee Lassie plan at 10½' was too small, I tried to enlarge the plan. The resulting shape was not what I had hoped for, especially since the inadequately steamed ribs "unwound" a bit when I took it off the form. The center section was too elongated and the whole thing was more like half a barrel with pointy ends than a canoe. The polyester resin, which is what was available at that time, did not bond well to the covering materials. The veneer was poor quality, pretty grain but it tended to split and was not at all flat. I found I could not make the fiberglass adhere to the low spots well, resulting in lumps and voids under the fiberglass. So what was actually my second boat began its life as a rather unattractive canoe. Once the resin began to crack I had a leaky boat as well.

The result was not all bad. It was extremely fast, tracked like an arrow, and really was lightweight. I had gained some valuable boat building experience and my son really liked that canoe. He is now an adult and married, so a few years ago I thought it would be nice if he had it for his own. However, the old brown thing was too unstable and dumped he and his wife into the ocean. That was the end of it for my daughter-in-law so I got it back. It had not been used since and was clearly not going to be used. The time had come to do something with it but what do you do with a canoe that you cannot bear to throw away, no one will take as a gift, and you are never going to use again yourself?

For me, the answer was to dis-assemble it and re-use the parts to make a new canoe. It would still have the same ash ribs (maybe I could re-bend them) and the keelson and gunwales. The shape would have to change

In Search of a Beautiful, Lightweight Canoe

By Hugh Groth

quite a bit but I could keep the 14' length. Maybe I could keep the stems and even the registration numbers could be the same for it would be a remodeled canoe, not a new one.

Now after these many years I have found a canoe that I really like. It is a functional and beautiful shape, but it is 18' long and with that length goes not only function but weight. Much as I like it for longer trips and canoe camping, it is a bit unwieldy and heavy for everyday use on local lakes. So I took offsets from that canoe, shortened up the station distance, and now had what I thought might be a good shape and length for the revised model.

Things were going well. I made up a spreadsheet of stations and positions, then drew each one by computer and faired the curves. I entered them in a 3D plot, connected the points, and faired again. On a small computer screen the thing looked good. Time to get started on the remodeling job.

I tore off all the polyester and veneer, then removed and saved the ribs, keelson, stems, and gunwales from the old brown canoe. Then I decided I needed new stems of a different shape, matching the slightly recurved stem shape of the larger canoe. These I plotted and cut from 4mm okoume plywood and mounted them on a strongback. I plotted the stations on paper, traced them onto three-ply heavy corrugated board, and cut them with a bandsaw. I had to lengthen the keelson to suit the new stems and still keep the boat the same length overall. This piece had to stay for it would provide stiffness to an otherwise rather wimply (technical term) canoe. Then I fastened the stations between the keelson and the strongback. Everything was ready for the stringers to which I would form the re-bent ribs.

All along I had worried about using the same technique as I had used years ago to make the previous lumpy, ugly canoe. Once again I was planning to use resin, epoxy this time, to fasten veneer to the bent ribs. I figured that if I used better quality veneer, maybe a tad thicker and a lot more uniform, I would have better success, applying two layers at right angles to each other and more carefully. I have seen this done on larger boats and my trial samples using poplar veneer seemed to work well. I planned to lay a "ply" from gunwale to gunwale, then another from end to end. In order to try it out I added a few trial stringers to the forms and took another piece of the veneer and laid it over them, without gluing, so I could get a feel for the possibilities of this idea.

At this point I realized once again that no amount of will power or desire was going to make a flat, rigid sheet of thin wood stretch over a compound curve any more than it had before. I could probably use planks of veneer, maybe about 3" wide, twist and wrap them over the ribs in such a way that they would not have to bend two directions at once, but I wanted to finish the canoe bright and a hodgepodge of planking directions would not do. Maybe if I cut the veneer into fairly narrow strips it would go better. After all, that is the way the strip builders do it. But how narrow? No mat-

ter how narrow I would go, there would still be finite angles between each strip as I go around the curve and I would have no margin of wood thickness to fair the hull with afterward.

It was time to think again. If I would cut the veneer into strips anyway and then glue it to closely spaced ribs, why not eliminate the ribs and make the strips a bit thicker? It probably would come out close to the same weight if I paid attention to the type of wood. Of course, now I would have a "traditional" wood strip canoe. I apparently came around to the concept the hard way but it sure made a lot of sense. This is a known technique and I would have some assurance of a strong and beautiful boat as well as one that was reasonably lightweight. Clearly I was about to start over but I rather enjoy the planning stage and I could probably still save a little of the old brown canoe.

And then I thought, do I really want to make a short, fat canoe again or might it make more sense to lengthen the plan to 16'? I would have to stretch the keelson once again and the gunwales would no longer be usable this time. A stretched keelson is just not enough of the old boat to call it a remodeled canoe so the old brown canoe is now gone, never to return.

I finished the new plan, faired on the computer as before. I kept the stems and the keelson, lengthened again. None of the reference books on strip building show these parts but this is only one of several areas in which I chose to differ with them. What follows is a description, not of the building process so much as my discoveries along the way.

The New Prettier Boat

I had a vision in my head of what my canoe would be like but I need to say a word about the plan. Almost never do I paddle alone, rather my wife and I are partners. Although I am not overweight, she is considerably lighter than I am and she is the bow paddler. I like the handling of our larger canoe, and it is asymmetrical and beamy which makes it very stable and adequately trim with our mismatched weights. Therefore, the new plan used offsets from that canoe set slightly closer together and faired. I did not position the stations uniformly, however, so that I could increase the asymmetry a bit. I already had the stations from the earlier plan and it did not take much to revise them to the new shape.

This is where I began to discover that it is best not to try to follow someone else's recipe for strip building. I consulted five different sources on the subject (see listing at end of article). Of course, they differ greatly in their technical approach and clarity. I used them all for ideas but I found that what was written apparently worked well for the people who wrote them, not always for me. Maybe the most help came from the two phone calls to Gougeon Brothers.

Station Forms: I mentioned earlier that my station forms were cut from heavy three-ply cardboard (free). Before final trimming I glued scrap wood strips to the edge to obtain about a ¾" inch square reinforcement. This stiffens the cardboard a little, but it also provides a ledge to clamp to for each strip. The conventional method is to use plywood and cut holes around the edge for clamping. Plywood with holes costs a lot and allows clamping only occasionally. Finally, I trimmed the forms with the clamping strips in place using the band saw set at an angle to approximately match the longitudinal slope of the canoe.

Cutting the Strips: I bought a DeWalt 7¼", 36-tooth construction finishing blade (#DW3176) and mounted it on my homeowner type Sears 10" table saw. It is a very thin kerf blade and the small size reduces the torque requirement of the saw. The small blade cuts cleanly and quickly but it helps to build an extension for the saw table, both sides, to support the wood as it moves through.

Wood Strips: It is not necessary to use cedar, but either that or redwood makes the lightest boat. Both are easy to work but I think redwood, if it can be found, is prettier. Fortunately I was given a pile of clear redwood by a carpenter friend, salvaged from one of his remodeling jobs. I used some pine for feature strips. It is not much heavier and almost as easy to work as cedar. And full-length pieces are not needed. In fact, they are hard to use and store and they break easily. A scarf joint, done on the building form during assembly, works well if care is taken and the glue joint will be stronger than the wood. It does not matter where the joints are placed, but for better appearance they should be offset. The scarf joint should be long (read reference books).

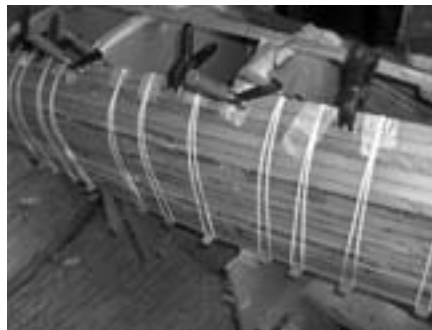
Strip Edges: The bead and cove edge joint that is reported to be so much easier is not needed. It seems to me that if any amount of sanding is done a bead and cove joint could come out wavy and production of the edges is expensive and wasteful of material. However, I did plane the strip edges on an angle where necessary to try to prevent gaps. I grooved a 2"x4" along one edge to hold the strip with about a third of the strip exposed above the groove. If a block plane is then used with its heel resting on the far side of the 2"x4" a uniform angle can be cut, lifting the heel of the plane when coming to the end of the strip. It will be a reasonably tight joint, and it will be straight.



Strip edging method.

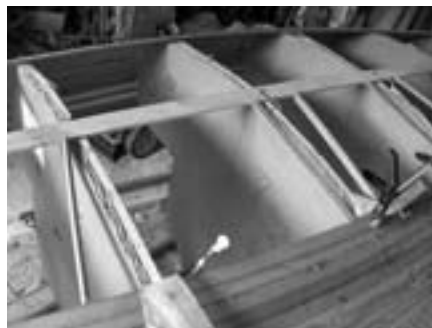
Clamping: The reference books recommend clamping the strips, if possible, at each station and stapling the strips together elsewhere. The stapling is meant to keep the strip edges flush and together. It did not work for me. Instead, I obtained a bag of postal rubber bands and used them with small wood blocks cut from strip scrap to do the same job. The bands acquire enough residual stretch using them to accommodate clamping the next strip, but at some point the ends of two or even three bands will have to be to interlocked to keep going. Also, lots of C-clamps or spring clamps of any sort will help.

Once all the clamps and bands are in place, walking along the canoe side aligning the strips with fingers can be done. Because they are clamped tightly they tend to stay in place. I also used scrap wood strips forced between the keelson and the strips, kind of



Rubber band clamps.

Station forms and wood spring clamps.



like a leaf spring, where it could be done. Any clamping method that works should be used. I used carpenters wood glue, agreeing with the books on this one for it dries faster and is easier to clean up and the epoxy sheathing will close it off from the elements. It is a good idea to use waxed paper to shield both the station forms and the rubber band or clamps from glue and epoxy.

Keelson: The reference books recommend several coats of glass cloth on the bottom to prevent flexing. I had this oak keelson and it seemed to me that it would do a better job for wood is stiffer than plastic for equivalent weight. My piece was ¾" thick and 1½" wide. I placed it flush with the outside of the boat and beveled the inside corners so there was no severe step in that area. The keelson also helped to align the planking strips along the bottom.

Strip Placing Technique: The straight center along the keelson can be used to make that part of the assembly fairly easy. As the assembly of wood strips reaches the flat area of the bottom straight strips can be laid along the keelson, tapering the ends to fit the existing oval opening. This means no having to edge bend the strips and it makes a nice looking floor.

Floor pattern.



Stems: I also installed internal stems of 4mm okoume plywood, both ends, also not necessarily recommended. They help with strength, in my opinion, and initially support the keelson above the framework of forms. They do get in the way of applying the glass cloth inside the ends but in a way they take the place of it there.

Sheathing: I used 4oz glass cloth 72" wide, which was much wider than I needed, so I placed it on the canoe slightly on the bias. This allowed the cloth to conform better to the compound curves it is wet out with epoxy. It also requires fewer yards of cloth because reinforcing pieces can be nested within the triangular scrap. For me it cost the same per yard as 60" cloth.

Details of the New Canoe

Overall dimensions are 15'8" (so that I can store it in my smallish barn/boatshed with the door closed) by 33½" wide and it weighs 46lbs. The maximum gunwale width, outside, is 32". If I subtract about 1½" combined for the gunwales I have a little under 1½" of tumblehome per side in the spot where I stroke the paddle. This allows the rear seat to be as far forward as possible, for better trim, and besides it looks good. The waterline length is only 2" less than the overall and it has rocker only in the last 3' of each end so it tracks well and is relatively fast enough for me.

I used reclaimed redwood boards that started at ¾" thick by approximately 8' long and cut them into strips ½" thick. They could be a little thicker if aggressive sanding is envisioned. The wood works easily. I scarfed them together on the forms as I built at about a 7° scarf angle (long joint). Clear pine makes nice feature strips along the side and it really perks up the sunburst pattern decks. The gunwales are white oak outside, ash inside with scuppers full length.

I know, a wood canoe will float even full of water, but I installed sealed chambers in the ends anyway. This way it might help float us as well in a (perish the thought) dunking and it hides the bad glass job in the ends. The decks are finished off with good, substantial oak handles built in. I cut the outline of loons in birdseye maple veneer and appliquéd them in place front and back prior to glassing. Edges were feathered to eliminate voids.

The canoe is sheathed inside and out with 4oz glass cloth with second layers in a football shape over the flat section of the bottom and slightly into the curve of the side. One coat of epoxy sealed the wood, each layer of cloth was wet out, and two additional coats of epoxy finished the job. I used West System® with the newer 207 hardener for clarity and longer working time. It was August, after all. It's a bit pricey but worth it. Two or three coats of gloss varnish will help protect it from UV rays. The curved caned seats and carrying yoke single thwart, all of ash, were purchased, cut to length, and installed. These seats are wonderfully comfortable.

I was given half round stem bands of copper/brass that had come from an antique canoe. They were beat up and heavy and I might not need them for the way we will use this boat, but they will protect the epoxy and they are so cool. Polished up they don't look bad.

I found that building a strip canoe was continually challenging, especially designing it myself. Working around other projects it took me about five months after I had the plan. (See "When Should You Build a Boat?", *MAIB*, September 15, 2007). There

may be some compromises along the way but I found the building to be fun and rewarding and the result is what I had hoped for. Best of

all, the new canoe tracks well, is responsive, and floats well trimmed with both of us in it. We look forward to many happy hours using

it, and because it is light I don't expect our canoeing to end even when we are old.

Finished canoe.



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References

When planning to build a strip canoe and not being proficient in strip building or wood/epoxy construction, at least one of the following books should be consulted:

Meade Gougeon; *The Gougeon Brothers on Boat Construction*, Gougeon Brothers, Inc, 2005; A top notch technical manual on wood/epoxy construction.

Susan Van Leuven; *Illustrated Guide to Wood Strip Canoe Building*, Shiffer Publishing, Ltd, 1998; Easy to follow with lots of photos. Best for a work of art.

Gil Gilpatrick; *Building a Strip Canoe*, DeLorme, 2002; Includes plans. Best if use takes precedence over appearance.

Randy Folsom; *Strip Built Canoe*, BookSurge, LLC, 2007; Good ideas, but a somewhat dogmatic approach.

Ted Moores and Marilyn Mohr; *Canoeecraft*, Camden House Publishing, Ltd, 1983; The complete classic on the subject.

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Noisy Advocacy Dept "Resistance is Futile"

In this issue, we will feature without further commentary three dense pieces of one-page handouts/petitions which we wrote to reflect our concerns. They are circulating locally:

1. A request for a Public Statement by Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations on our project. If you read Chapter 7 you will be fully in the loop on this.

2. A statement expressing the local fishermen's perspective on certain realities they are coping with.

3. A local political appeal to protect the viability of the port from the pressure to re-zone over 70% of it.

We will report on respective responses shortly. Some long-expected developments have occurred...

Request for a Public Statement on this Sustainable/Green Commercial Fisheries Project

We ask for your organization's public political/philosophical perspective on this matter. Since 1952 we have drawn over 670 designs for power and sail boats and vessels for pleasure, residential, commercial, and governmental agency uses. We wrote five books (McGraw-Hill) on the subject. Over 55 years we sought only a modest amount of work in the fishing industry, including wooden lobster boats, gill netters, and a dragger, along with a few aluminum types, but with next to none in recent decades we were already well booked. Alerted in 2002 by the growing crisis arising out of the combination of resource decline and tightening fisheries regulation coinciding with increasing first operating cost and cost of living we've examined across now 800+ pro bono hours this reality and its opportunities.

Findings

1. We observed how past under-effective controls by regulators prompted ecological watchdog groups to legally challenge declines in the resource, resulting in the imposition on the fleet of resource rebuilding plans via strict catch limits.

2. We observed how past fishing practices had also favored a high-carbon footprint fleet structure but which is now progressively implausible to support the fishing industry under strict regulations of resource sustainability.

3. And we also observed, and came to publicly testify, on how a number of deeply-entrenched regulatory concepts do actually prevent the fleet from evolving towards vessel economical attributes in keeping with sustainability of the resource. This inconsistency is a serious obstacle against any plausible definition of ecology-based fisheries management.

4. Since 2004 we have alerted regional representatives of Conservation Law Foundation, Oceana, and Ocean Conservancy to the significance of vessel economics and coun-

Bolger on Design

Messing About in Fishing Boats

Chapter 8

ter-ecological regulation in current resource management, but found no resonance.

5. None of these most engaged environmental interests have taken on, for instance, these counter-ecological regulations:

a.) Defining a vessel's fishing capability by its length (rather than its weight) has resulted in progressively inefficient hull geometries of short, wide, heavy proportions that dictate unprecedented energy burn per mile traveled.

b.) Certain regulations force fuel burn multiplication by imposing time sensitive dictates that reward high carbon use high speed craft.

6. And none of these groups have insisted on explicit provisions in recent, current and pending regulation that would allow, encourage, and reward any reorientation towards carbon footprint sensitive vessel concepts that are imperative for any ecologically inherent concept of sustainable taking of the resource as a reliable supply of natural, pure and unadulterated animal protein.

The Project

Documented by Mission Statements towards green fisheries and articles since 2004, we have initiated here in Gloucester this private/public cooperative effort to develop greenest fishing vessel prototypes as an expression of civic and corporate responsibility, extensive design experience in diverse vessel geometries and economics, guided by principles of the conservation economy. It favors the preponderance of a myriad of small business type family fishing enterprises (coastal community stakeholders) as a structural model for this idiosyncratic industry to assure nimble daily responses based on agile perception of opportunities across the broad spectrum of commercial species under unpredictable conditions of weather, catering to market demands within parameters of sustainability.

As of early September 2007 we have collected the support of a sizable segment of the local fleet, a range of harbor front business owners, local, state, and federal political leaders, and are in the process of securing local, state, and federal funding to incubate this R&D effort. We will report on experimentation and will offer successful vessel designs to the fleet to advance its evolution towards sustainability. This is an urgent local independent effort with broad relevance for the fishing fleet, its regulation and sustainability of the resource.

Request

We ask for an unambiguous public statement of philosophical support (or rejection) by your organization on this effort to develop low carbon footprint prototypes using sustainable operational practices towards the greenest commercial fishing fleet.

We will publicly report your statement.

We think it plausible and appropriate to expect your response within four weeks as your policy is assumed to be already clearly defined.

We will report a non-response as a hostile public rejection of this initiative.

We are delivering this request and attached documents either by hand delivery or certified/registered mail to assure certain arrival.

Yours sincerely, Phil Bolger and Susanne Altenburger

Some Fishermen's Perspective On the Future Fleet

This is a self-help effort from and for Gloucester's fleet and harbor and may help fishermen and fleets elsewhere as well.

Serious Challenges

1. The industry is attempting to survive the most severe catch regulation to support the rebuilding of the resource.

2. This significant loss of income comes at a time when fuel costs, boat building costs, not to mention general costs of living, are going up dramatically. In recent memory fuel cost has tripled, steel cost doubled, aluminum cost multiplied along with fiberglass and resin, with cost of living increases pushing up man hours billing per job as well.

Left alone without technical support, no research into vessel economics in the context of resource management:

Fishermen and their fleet appear to be largely left alone to cope with this mismatch of limited resource availability and accelerating cost of vessel ownership, operation, and cost of living. Apart from limited short term episodes of cooperative research on gear and resource assessment available to a few in the fleet, there appears to be little substantive technical help forthcoming from the well funded and staffed institutions of research and analysis in the Northeast, or on national level for that matter.

After multiple attempts across several years to establish cooperation it is unambiguously clear (see exceptions below) that neither individual academic institutions nor regional bodies of research and industry, governance nor most of the green watchdog groups (Oceana, Ocean Conservancy, Conservation Law Foundation) are ready to pursue research and development in support of the obvious technical challenge of matching vessel economics with the economics of resource availability! Whether this may be rooted in a lack of comprehension of the significance of this issue or reflects absence of

imagination of viable technical perspectives, whatever the reasons this vital issue continues year after year to go unaddressed.

There is no well-established in-depth discussion on how inherently indispensable vessel economics and safety actually are to any claims of a coherent agenda of fisheries research and management. And the neglect of this subject has fostered the hard fleet structural mismatch between economic and ecological demands that now imperils the fleet. In fact, this widespread indifference has resulted in widespread assumptions and thus regulations that have well proven to work against the health of the resource and thus the sustainability of the fleet.

Notable Exceptions

New England NMFS under Patricia Kurkul who offered an R&D permit for this project in early December 2004, and Ecotrust of Canada (Vancouver, BC) that financed a research trip for boat designers Phil Bolger & Friends to BC to connect with local fishermen in their communities and their vessel economic needs: ecotrustcan.org's focus is on the conservation economy; i.e., running a profitable business sustainably by using the resource sustainably.

It is urgently necessary to examine all technical opportunities to upgrade vessel economics and technology to match the resource sustainability and thus the sustainability of the fleet and port.

Therefore, we will focus on a disciplined pursuit of green approaches to develop the most sustainable fishing fleet and fishing techniques. Using smarter concepts based on an emphasis of renewable materials we will attempt to dramatically reduce vessel cost fuel consumption, enhance ergonomics aboard, and push hard to increase vessel safety by pursuing unsinkability* and higher levels of stability to seriously improve crew survivability during four season fishing for a living.

Here is a preliminary list of projects to start building a stout knowledge base that can be shared by all in the fleets:

Project #1: Construction of a plywood/fiberglass/epoxy light trailerable inshore 30'x7'8"x 90hp (outboard) 20kts fishing craft along with thorough four-season testing to examine its utility as an entry-level economic unsinkable* business foundation for lobstering, long lining, gill netting, jigging, tuna and swordfishing, etc.

Project #2: Using any available and running 35'-40' production inshore inboard fiberglass fishing boat hull to investigate whether it is possible and what it takes to make a very common hull type unsinkable*.

Project #3: Construction of a type of wide appeal that matches the current days-at-sea regime in the form of an unsinkable* 35-40' inboard inshore/offshore 20kts planing craft with superior stability characteristics to roam far offshore and across the seasons.

Project #4: Construction of a first all-out fuel miser including the use of sail assist to explore the mix of necessary attributes for a post DAS regulatory system where least carbon footprint combined with premium catch quality is vital to a thriving business.

This list is just a preliminary one and only touches on a few initial projects. Greener stern trawling must also be investigated for resources not catchable by any other measures along with progressively wilder hull geometries to explore the extremes of efficiency and common sense.

Underlying all this work is the imperative to become as green as possible by design, construction, and operation in order to re-assert a strong positive public image backed by hard evidence and reliable track record of intentions and actual daily deeds to be "Stewards of the Resource." Only the most convincing show of willingness, capability, and then business success will produce public sympathy and support for the fleets.

We invite our green friends to emphatically support our effort, philosophically in public and politically before the Council, regional legislators, and Congress, particularly in the targeting of regulations that actually stand in the way of this urgent evolution towards shared sustainability of resource, the fleet, and its communities. We present an unprecedented opportunity for them to very publicly and vigorously state their wholehearted support of the conservation economy at the heart of their philosophical concerns where businesses and communities thrive by sustainably managing and nurturing the resource in all its diversity.

This proposal by Philip C. Bolger and Friends Inc. emerged in the fall of 2002 as a pro bono expression of civic and corporate responsibility.

*Up to prescribed maximum heavier than water gear or payload per given hull. Overloaded, even these types of hulls can be made to sink.

A Petition in Support of Gloucester's Working Inner Harbor

Gloucester, Massachusetts, is "America's Oldest Seaport," founded in 1623 by fishermen to be close to particularly fertile fishing grounds. Since then most of the shoreline around the Inner Harbor has matured into Gloucester's oldest and largest fully zoned and permitted industrial park based primarily on commercial fishing and its associated industries. As a profitably located high value economic asset it is one of only four commercial ports so designated and protected by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In recent years Gloucester's Inner Harbor has had to absorb painful reduction of income and thus jobs and tax base due to prior fisheries practices and resulting draconian regulations in support of resource rebuilding. We are now at the depth of these harsh limits on this fleet. It is time to examine all technical opportunities to upgrade vessel and fishing technology to match resource sustainability in an age of steadily increasing fuel cost, boat building cost, fishing gear cost, and cost of living in and around this port.

It is time to prepare the port's infrastructure to profitably support the scientifically projected multiplication of fishing potential. Only advanced approaches to sustainable fishing and this harbor's infrastructure will support the re-emergence of the fleet and thus re-establishment of the solid commercial viability of this port to steadily grow its jobs and tax base for the city!

We therefore support here and now (summer 2007) the federal and state funding of a series of experimental fishing craft in Gloucester under the guidance of Gloucester's own senior boat designer, Philip C. Bolger (in business since 1952, six books) in order to present to fishermen and incubate in the Inner Harbor greener and thus more sustainable business opportunities. Phil Bolger proposes:

1. To use advanced principles of green

design, construction, and operation to test and demonstrate a broad variety of suitable vessel configurations including the investigation of sail power in a hybrid propulsion context that feature significantly enhanced fuel economy, advanced applications of renewable resources, and which support sustainable and profitable fishing methods.

2. To advance vessel safety by developing hard unsinkability, enhancing stability, and refining appropriate ergonomics.

3. That only the disciplined pursuit of greenest approaches to fishing will help resolve destructive policy conflicts between the fleet, its regulators, and the environmental watchdog groups monitoring both, favoring instead more productive cooperation.

4. To thus incubate the revival of commercial boat building that will contribute substantial value adding marine industrial use to Gloucester's Inner Harbor. Ninety-seven percent of the current fleet of fishing boats was not built on Cape Ann, a serious loss of business!

5. To foster steady and thus profitable supply of year-round and seasonal species landings at the piers of a broad variety of local processors who value add to this catch under a well-promoted Gloucester-based name brand as a symbol of highly evolved fishing stewardship offering sustainable quality to the local, regional, and national consumer.

6. To upgrade the Inner Harbor's value adding potential by supporting multiple fish processing facilities through:

a) a stationary or mobile pre-treatment plant or a self-propelled fish processing waste water collection barge that disposes offshore; and

b) a railway siding off the MBTA tracks alongside Route 127 to Rockport as the greenest fast shipment of fish product containers.

All this is predicted to significantly enhance the Inner Harbor's marine industrial commerce base to assure sustainability of the resource, the fleet, and this port based on broad local ownership of diverse businesses, properties, entrepreneurial skills, and drive.

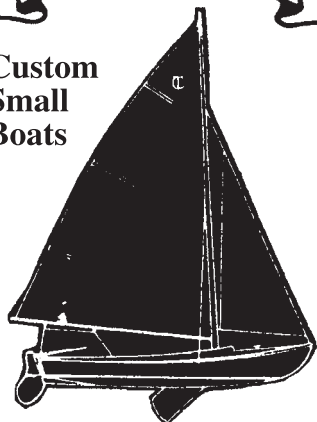
Please share your support for this initiative with your friends and ask them to support this opportunity to strengthen our port.

(The undersigned publicly support this proposal as timely and essential for the future of this port, vital for the sustainability of the fleet, and understand that this comprehensive perspective goes unaddressed by other organizations of research and analysis.)

This proposal by Philip C. Bolger and Friends, Inc. emerged in the fall of 2002 as a pro bono expression of civic and corporate responsibility. A first version was presented November 3, 2002, to Dale Brown, then Community Development Director for the City of Gloucester and personal assistant to Mayor John Bell; he offered 20 minutes of his attention on January 23, 2003. We testified in person and in writing during Amendment 13 hearings. *National Fisherman* magazine spent 10 hours interviewing time and 2,000+ words for the September 2004 edition (page 42), later calling it one of "2004's Best Ideas" (January 2005). As of December 2004, National Marine Fisheries Service has offered a dedicated Research & Development fishing permit for this project. All local and many regional fisheries chiefs have been approached. On November 26, 2005, the *Gloucester Daily Times* featured a 2,000+ word article on page A11. It's been an 800-hour effort so far. Write/FAX us at P.O. Box 1209, Gloucester, MA 01930, FAX (978) 282-1349.

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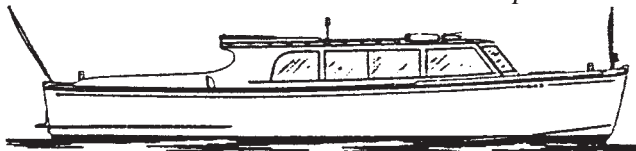
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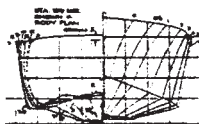
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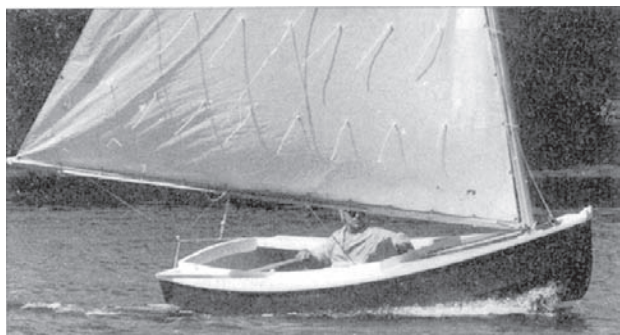
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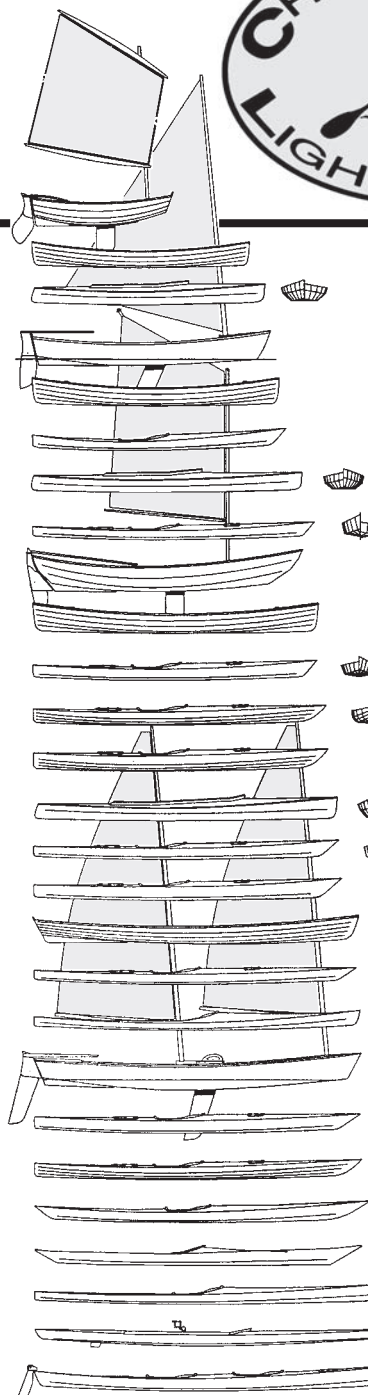
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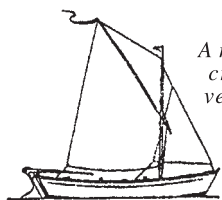
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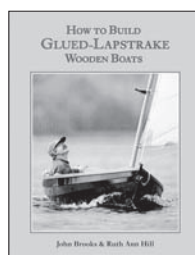


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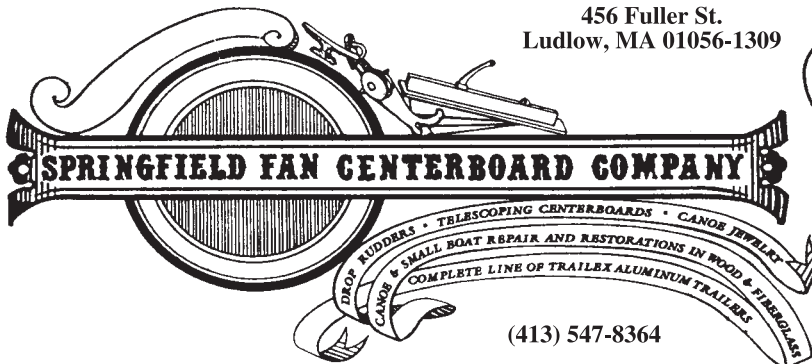
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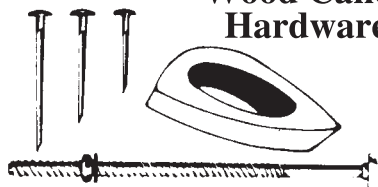
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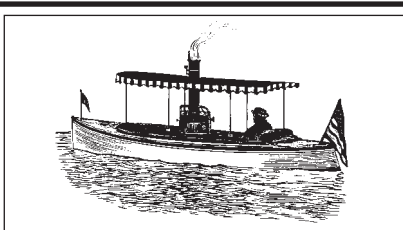


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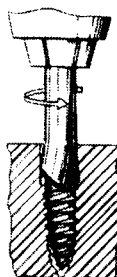
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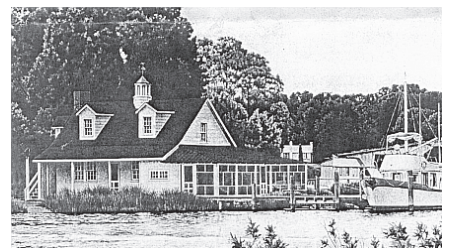


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